DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 376 096 SO 024 464

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TITLE Three Worlds Meet: The Columbian Encounter and Its Legacy. A Unit of Study for Grades 5-9.
INSTITUTION National Center for History in the Schools, Los Angeles, CA.
SPONS AGENCY National Endowment for the Humanities (NFAH), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 104p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Center for History in the Schools, 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 761, Los Angeles, CA 90024-4108.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS American Indians; *Culture Conflict; *Culture Contact; Grade 5; Grade 6; Grade 7; Grade 8; Grade 9; *History Instruction; Intermediate Grades; Junior High Schools; Middle Schools; Primary Sources; Social Studies; *World History
IDENTIFIERS *Columbus (Christopher)

ABSTRACT

This unit is one of a series that presents specific moments in history from which students focus on the meanings of landmark events. Columbus's momentous arrival in 1492 in the Caribbean ended the mutual isolation of two regions of the globe. From this moment on, the future of the Americas has been inextricably linked to those of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The watershed encounter between Columbus and Native Americans signalled the beginning of an ever increasing global interdependence that has had monumental effects, both positive and negative, for world history. Only by studying the historical context in which Columbus sailed can one hope to arrive at an accurate and balanced understanding of this pivotal event. The lessons included in this unit present the Columbian encounter from a variety of perspectives. This unit begins by comparing and contrasting American and European cultures before 1492. It then examines the changes in European society leading to the wave of maritime exploration at the end of the fifteenth century, resulting in the famed contact between Europeans and Native Americans. Finally, it explores the dramatic changes wrought by the interaction between two previously isolated regions. Students should learn from this unit that the actions of historically prominent figures such as Columbus often reflect the general trends and values of their time. This knowledge, however, should not lead them to see history as a string of inevitable events; rather individual choices and contingency shape history. Contains 11 references. (Author/DK)

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THREE WORLDS MEET: THE COLUMBIAN ENCOUNTER AND ITS LEGACY

A UNIT OF STUDY FOR GRADES 5-9

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS
A Cooperative Research Program of the
University of California, Los Angeles
and the National Endowment for the Humanities

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On the cover: Guiliano Dati woodcut accompanying the Italian edition of Columbus's report of his first voyage to America. Published in 1493.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In addition to the contributions of authors James Drake and Joseph Palumbo, Supervising Historian Gary B. Nash, and Project Director Linda Symcox, the Center also acknowledges the important contributions of the following to this teaching unit: Sharon Rudahl for her artwork, Gwynn Lewis for copy-editing, and Leticia Zermeno for copyright-research activities. Special appreciation is due to Brenda Thomas who created the desktop layouts and unit designs, and brought the publication to final completion.

Finally, we acknowledge the continuing contributions of the National Endowment for the Humanities which established the National Center for History in the Schools in March 1988 and has generously supported this activity.

For information on additional teaching units and other resources from the Center, please write:

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APPROACH AND RATIONALE

By Linda Symcox

The National Center for History in the Schools has developed the following collection of lessons for teaching. Our units are the fruit of a year-long collaboration between history professors and experienced teachers of both United States and World History. They represent specific "**dramatic moments**" in history from which you and your students can pause to delve into the deeper meanings of selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative.

In our approach, the continuing narrative provides the context in which the dramatic moment is situated. By studying a crucial turning-point in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected dramatic moments that best bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our dramatic moments are based on **primary sources**, taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers and literature from the period under study. As you know, a primary source is a **first-hand** account of any event in history. For example, the telecast or the script of a speech would be a primary source. A secondary source is a **second-hand** account of an event. This would be, for example, the newspaper account of the speech the next day or a newscaster's report about the speech. All historical accounts, such as textbooks, are by their very

nature secondary sources. What we hope to achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to remove the distance that students feel from historical events and to connect them more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to re-create for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

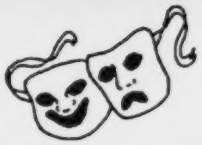
Within this unit, you will find: 1) **Teacher Background Materials** and 2) **Lesson Plans** with **Student Resources**. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. We have chosen to pitch the various lessons on different grade levels and they can usually be adapted to a slightly higher or lower level.

The **Teacher Background** section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to link the specific **Dramatic Moment** to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The **Lesson Plans** include a variety of ideas and ap-

proaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. These resources consist of primary source documents, any handouts or student background materials, and in many cases, a bibliography for the unit.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of inevitable facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories, and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction, rather than rote memorization.



EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF COLUMBUS

The day on which they finally reached a small island...they saw some naked people and the Admiral went ashore in the armed boat... The Admiral brought out the royal standard, and the captains unfurled two banners of the green cross, which the Admiral flew as his standard on all the ships, with an F [Ferdinand] and a Y [Isabella], and a crown over each letter. When they landed they saw trees, very green, many streams and a large variety of fruits. The Admiral called the two captains and the others who landed and made them bear witness and testimony that he, in their presence, took possession, as in fact he did take possession, of the said island in the names of the King and Queen, His Sovereigns, making the requisite declarations, as is more fully recorded in the statutory instruments the requisite declarations, as is more fully recorded in the statutory instruments which were set down in writing.

Source: B.W. Ife, ed., *Christopher Columbus: Journal of the First Voyage* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1990). Page 29.

I. UNIT OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

Columbus's monumentous arrival in 1492 in the Caribbean ended the mutual isolation of two regions of the globe. From this moment on, the future of the Americas has been inextricably linked to those of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The watershed encounter between Columbus and Native Americans signalled the beginning of an ever-increasing global interdependence that has had monumental effects—both positive and negative—for world history. These effects continue into the present. Accordingly, historical portrayals of Columbus have varied tremendously. At one extreme he appears a mythic hero, a bold adventurer and intrepid navigator, the honoree of a national holiday, and the worthy namesake for dozens of U.S. cities and a South American country. At the opposite extreme, many see him as responsible for an environmental holocaust and five-hundred years of genocide. Only by studying the historical context in which Columbus sailed can we hope to arrive at an accurate and balanced understanding of this pivotal event.

The lessons included in this unit present the Columbian encounter from a variety of perspectives. For centuries, educators have taught the story of the Columbian encounter from a European point of view, as the discovery of a "New World" and the subsequent expansion of Europeans into it. It is important to remember that after 1492 both Native Americans and even those Europeans who stayed at home also lived in a "New World." With the arrival of Europeans the Americas acquired a host of diseases, flora, fauna, and unfamiliar cultures. For Europeans, the knowledge of two previously unknown continents challenged conventional wisdom and their traditional world view. At the same time, it would be inaccurate to portray Native Americans and Africans as merely

reacting to European exploits. Indeed, as this unit demonstrates, Native Americans and Africans significantly shaped the subsequent development of both the Americas and Europe. This unit begins by comparing and contrasting American and European cultures before 1492. It then examines the changes in European society leading to the wave of maritime exploration at the end of the fifteenth century, which resulted in the famed contact between Europeans and Native Americans. Finally, it explores the dramatic changes wrought by the interaction between two previously isolated regions.

Students should learn from this unit that the actions of historically prominent figures such as Columbus often reflect the general trends and values of their time. This knowledge, however, should not lead them to see history as a string of inevitable events; rather individual choices and contingency shape history. Regardless of whether those involved in the Columbian encounter made good or bad decisions, studying those decisions will help students to understand the world today.

II. UNIT CONTEXT

This unit would fit nicely after any studies of the Crusades, the Renaissance, European maritime exploration, or Ancient American history. As the scope of this lesson is broad, it could also serve as an introduction to several topics, especially European colonization of the Americas, slavery and the slave trade, Native American history after 1492, or the history of Mexico. Finally, this unit can help students understand the current controversy surrounding Columbus and the five hundred year anniversary of his first voyage to the Americas by placing it in its proper historical context.

III. UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To understand how the European world view had developed in the years preceding Columbus's voyage and how Christo/Eurocentrism pervaded this view.

2. To understand that before 1492 many diverse societies existed in the Americas. Students will also get the opportunity to explore the Aztec world view in greater depth. In doing so, they will learn how historians draw on archaeological sources to study Native Americans. They will also compare European societies to Native American societies.

3. Students will learn that glory, religion, and profit motivated Columbus to sail. The will also learn what shipboard conditions were like.

4. Students will understand how the motives and beliefs of both Europeans and Americans helped to shape the first encounters between the two peoples. They will read accounts of these encounters from both Spanish and Aztec points of view.

5. Students will learn that ethnocentrism and the drive for profit led some Spaniards to exploit the labor of Native Americans and Africans. They will learn about the brutality of the African slave trade.

6. Students will learn about the exchange of culture, flora, fauna, and disease that took place after 1492. They will understand that many of the problems facing us today have plagued the world since 1492.

IV. INTRODUCTION TO THE COLUMBIAN ENCOUNTER

On October 12, 1492, Columbus first landed on the island that he named Hispaniola (today shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Columbus mistakenly believed he had accomplished his primary goal of finding a short, trans-Atlantic route to Asia. For years European sailors had longed to find a shortcut to replace the overland trading routes to East Asia. Many sailors at the time, including Columbus, may have heard the Icelandic sagas describing Leif Eriksson's voyages to Newfoundland five-hundred years earlier. Portuguese sailors had already begun to expand Europe's knowledge of the Eastern Atlantic, and Columbus, like many Europeans, speculated that India and Asia lay across the Atlantic; thus it is important to note that while Columbus had pioneered an unprecedented route across the Atlantic, his voyage constituted just a single chapter in a long saga of European maritime exploration. In the late fifteenth century, trends in economics, demographics, technology, cartography, and religion converged, leading to a competition primarily between Spain and Portugal to expand trade and Christianity. Within this context, Columbus deserves the credit for linking Europe and the Americas and also deserves to be held accountable for his individual actions and decisions. Yet it is worth noting that had he not attempted his voyage or had it failed, another mariner would have eventually awakened Europe to the existence of the Americas.

At the close of the fifteenth century, Europe's geographic knowledge improved dramatically. Contrary to popular myth, Columbus as well as most Europeans understood the world to be round. In 1487, the Portuguese sailor Bartholomew Diaz had rounded the southern tip of

Africa in search of a sea route to Asia. Ten years later, and five years after Columbus's voyage across the Atlantic, Vasco da Gama of Portugal rounded the Cape of Africa and travelled as far as India. Despite the scope of these voyages, however, Europeans remained uncertain about the earth's circumference until 1522, when Magellan of Spain circumnavigated the globe. In 1492, Columbus had under-estimated the earth's circumference by two-thirds. Ironically, had Columbus known the actual size of the world he probably would not have attempted to cross the Atlantic. Ignorance gave him the impetus to sail.

Columbus's voyages depended upon many other factors. At the end of the fifteenth century, Europe had largely recovered the huge population loss incurred during the plague of the 1340s. Accordingly, many felt the need to expand the European economy into foreign markets, especially Asia. This expansion would not have been possible without the rise of strong unified monarchies in Europe that could finance maritime voyages. In Spain, Isabella and Ferdinand married, uniting the kingdoms of Castille and Aragon under one monarchy. This monarchy came to power at the end of a long war between Christians and Muslims in Europe. Having just expelled the Jews and Muslims from their country, Ferdinand and Isabella sought to expand their economic power as well as their religion. Fortunately for Columbus, his request of support from the Spanish government for his trans-Atlantic voyage coincided with these developments.

On the eve of Columbus's first voyage, according to recent estimates, as many as seventy-five million people lived in the Americas. These people, inaccurately named "Indians" by Columbus who mistakenly believed he had landed in Asia, descended from the first true discoverers

of the continent. When Columbus arrived in the Caribbean five-hundred years ago, he met a people whose ancestors had arrived over twelve-thousand years before him. As nomadic bands chasing big game, they came from Asia via a land bridge that at one time connected Alaska to Siberia. Over time these first pioneers had spread out and settled throughout North and South America.

It is impossible to characterize the typical American of 1492, because of the continent's tremendous cultural diversity. The lack of written evidence makes this task even more difficult, and it especially complicates efforts to understand American history before 1492. Nevertheless, archaeological evidence does provide a glimpse at the long history of these peoples. The stereotype of the warrior on horseback roaming the great plains and living in perfect harmony with the environment can be readily dismissed. Native Americans had no horses until after the arrival of Europeans. Instead, living throughout the Americas many different peoples had adopted to a multiplicity of environments and climates. Their histories are full of innovations and inventions produced in complete isolation from Europeans. Some used complex calendars and lived in cities larger than any in Europe at the time. Many lived in small villages and survived by growing corn and hunting game. Throughout the Americas existed a variety of political, social, and cultural systems. Native Americans spoke over two-thousand languages at the time of Columbus's arrival, and their political and social structures were diverse.

With the arrival of white men in 1492, radical changes shook American communities. For many, disease marked their first encounter with the European world. Before 1492 Native Americans had not acquired, nor had they

needed, immunities to the diseases that Europeans carried. Among them, small pox proved the deadliest. In some areas 90 percent of the population had been decimated before they had even seen a white man. Coastal societies acquired diseases that spread to inland societies through routine contact.

As time passed, however, it became apparent that racism and greed posed an equally great enemy to native peoples. Columbus's first voyage was a relatively small undertaking, and after only ten weeks in the Caribbean he returned to Spain with only a handful of trade goods and six kidnapped natives. His apparent success, however, brought him financial support for three subsequent and much larger voyages. His second voyage consisted of seventeen ships carrying over 1,200 Spaniards and allowed for extended contact between Native Americans and Europeans. Not finding the abundant and readily accessible deposits of gold he had expected, yet determined to make his discovery profitable for Europeans, Columbus, against the Queen of Spain's desires, enslaved 1,600 natives and brought a third of them back to Spain. Herein lay the ominous beginning of the Atlantic slave trade. Subsequent settlers in the "New World" would reverse the dominant flow of the trade by bringing Africans to the Americas rather than taking Native Americans back to the "Old World." In the end, Europeans enslaved approximately eleven million Africans over a period of four centuries for use in the Americas.

During his lifetime, Columbus's discoveries seemed relatively insignificant compared to those of the Portuguese sailors along the coast of Africa. Columbus died in poverty in 1506, disgraced by the Spanish government for insubordination. To the day of his death he believed that he had discovered a trans-Atlantic route to Asia. In

retrospect, however, his encounter takes on far greater importance. True, he did not pioneer the much heralded water route to Asia. Instead, he brought to an end the isolation of two hemispheres and ushered in the era of global interdependence in which we live today. After 1492, disease, flora, fauna, and masses of people with diverse cultures flowed between the previously separate regions of the globe.

V. LESSON PLANS

1. The Changing European World View

2. The Many Peoples of the Americas

3. The First Voyage: Motives and Shipboard Conditions

4. First Encounters

5. Relations Among the Races

6. Seeds of Change

THE CHANGING EUROPEAN WORLD VIEW

A. Objectives

1. Students will understand the concept of a Christian/European centered world view by analyzing and interpreting the "Ebstorf World Map" of 1240.

2. Students will understand how European cartographic knowledge had expanded by 1492 yet failed to comprehend the true size of the world.

3. By tracing Columbus's routes, students will understand how Columbus's voyages further expanded European cartographic knowledge.

4. Students will understand that although Columbus receives credit as the first European explorer to establish lasting contact with the Americas, he was simply one of many European explorers attempting to expand European influence.

B. Lesson Background Materials

That Columbus tried to reach Asia by sailing across the Atlantic tells us something about Europe's cartographic knowledge at the time. Contrary to popular myth, most Europeans believed the earth to be round. Several centuries earlier, however, Europe's world view had differed radically from that of Columbus. In the thirteenth century, as the first map in this lesson demonstrates, Christianity heavily influenced Europe's geographical perception. The "Ebstorf World Map" of 1240 demonstrates some of the religious ethnocentricity of Europe that persisted through Columbus's day and beyond. This map depicts the world as the body of Christ, with

Christianity's most holy city—Jerusalem—at its center. Christ's head sits at the top of the map (the east), his feet at the bottom (the west), and his hands lay outstretched at the sides (north and south) offering salvation. Europe has the most cities, while the non-Christian people of Asia and Africa often appear as monsters and cannibals. Columbus inherited portions of this ethnocentric world view in which Christianity occupies the center of the earth; beyond this center lay non-Christians awaiting "discovery."

Although the spiritual theme constitutes the focal point of the Ebstorf map, its basic structure derives from the "T-O" map that originated before Christ. In these maps the three known continents sit surrounded by an ocean and separated by the Don, the Nile, and the Mediterranean. Asia occupies the top half, Europe the bottom left, and Africa the bottom right. The Ebstorf map follows this pattern, with Spain situated just above Christ's feet and Italy jutting out into the water just below the center.

By Columbus's time cartographic renditions of the earth had become much more similar to those of the present day. In 1492, Martin Behaim produced the second map that appears in this lesson, and it accurately represents Columbus's vision of the world. The Americas are noticeably absent from the map, and Columbus's stated destination of Japan and Asia lies due east of Europe. Not only were Columbus and Behaim unaware of the Americas, but they also grossly understimated the circumference of the earth. They believed the world to be one-third of its actual circumference. For Columbus, this underestimation made a trans-oceanic voyage to Asia seem reasonable. Ironically, had he known the true size of the earth he may not have ventured across the Atlantic.

The lack of an accurate means to measure longitude contributed to Columbus's underestimation of the circumference of the world. While Columbus and other Europeans had borrowed technological innovations from throughout their own continent as well as Asia and Africa, navigators of the time could still produce only crude estimates of the distances they had travelled to the east or west. The use of a magnetic compass, borrowed from Muslims in the twelfth century, told European navigators the direction they travelled. Latitude, or north-south position, could be accurately gauged by examining the position of the sun or stars. Longitude, on the other hand, could only be estimated through a sailor's guess at how fast and for how long a ship had been travelling. The exploits of other navigators in "the age of exploration" (see **DOCUMENT D**) contributed to Columbus and Europe's geographical knowledge, but not until Magellan circumnavigated the globe in 1522 did Europeans have a true feeling for the size of the earth.

Sources: J.B. Harley, *Maps and the Columbian Encounter* (1990); William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips, *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (1992); and Gary B. Nash, Julie Roy Jeffrey, et al., *The American People Creating a Nation and a Society*, 2nd ed. (1990).

C. Lesson Activities

1. Have students look at modern world maps (desktops, wall or atlas) and ask them to locate North America. Lead the students in a discussion framed around the question *Why is North America almost always in the middle?*

2. Help students understand the concept of *centrism*—the idea that your world is at the center and all else radiates outward from that point.

Examples:
current world map
Chinese concept of the "Middle Kingdom"
All roads lead to Rome

3. Distribute **DOCUMENT A** to students, the "Ebstorf World Map" of 1240. Using the teacher's information in the lesson background, and the guiding questions, help students to see how this map is an example of Christian/European centrism

4. Explain that by the time of Columbus (250 + years later) cartographic knowledge had expanded. Distribute **DOCUMENT B**, *Geographische Vorstellung*. Indicate that although an improvement, it still lacks a knowledge of part of the world. What is that part? (North and South America).

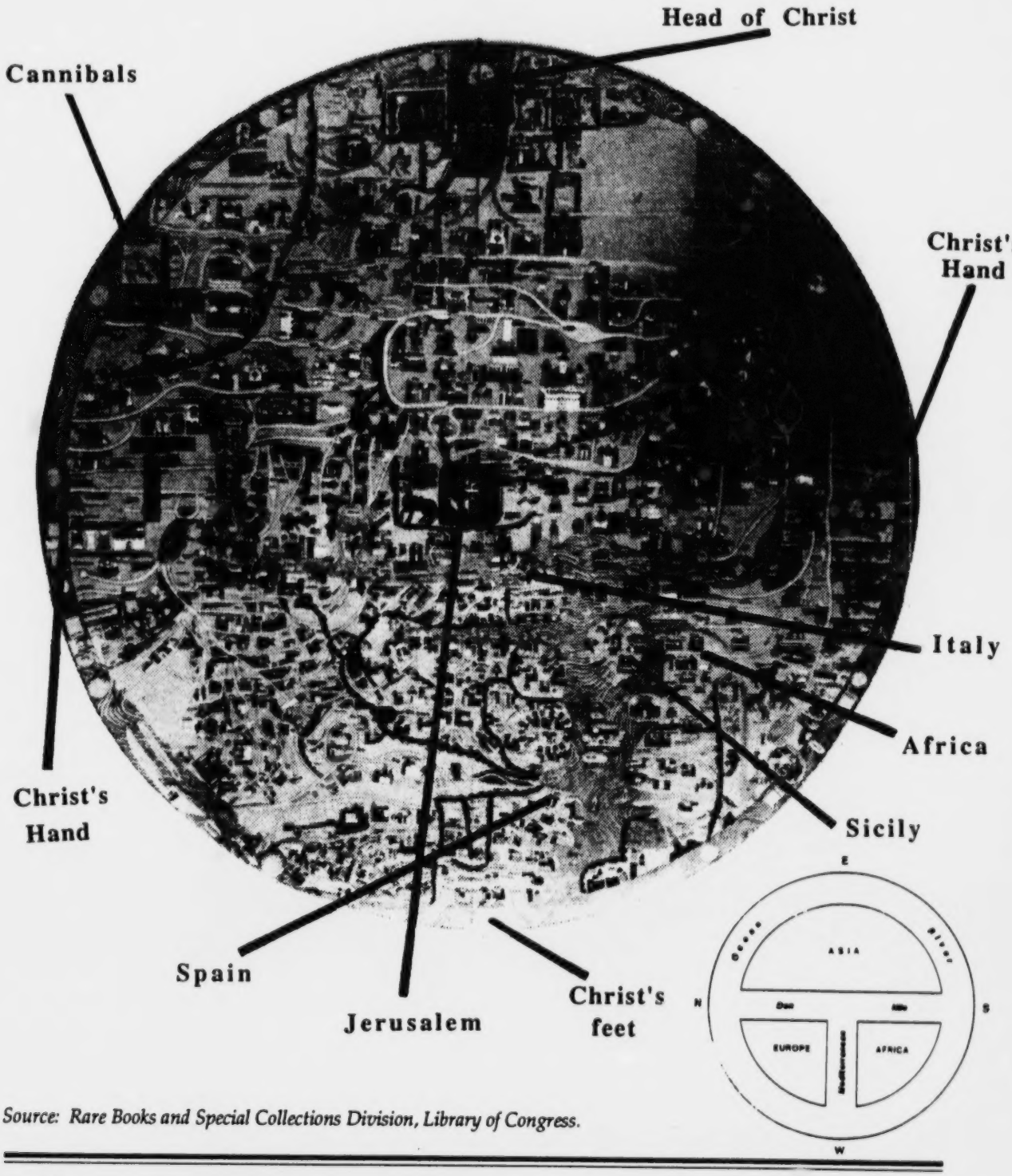
5. **DOCUMENT B** is important for it is under this cartographic framework that European explorers felt they could sail west from Europe to reach Asia. Why did they think that? (They didn't know what was in the way.)

6. Show students the map of Columbus's first voyage, **DOCUMENT C.** Compare this to **DOCUMENT** B. Ask students how his voyage expanded European cartographic knowledge? (i.e. Columbus ran into the Americas on his way to Asia.)

7. Distribute **DOCUMENT D.** Ask students to trace and color-code routes of various explorers giving a different color to each country. Use the completed map to help students see that although Columbus is regarded as "first," he was one of many Europeans attempting to expand European influence.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT A

EBSTORF MAP c. 1240



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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT A

1. List examples of how this map shows a Christian/European centered view of the world.

2. Based on this map, what might European explorers expect to find to the east?

3. How can you use the map to help you prove this statement: *"Europeans believed that all the world could and should be converted to Christianity."*

GEOGRAPHISCHE VORSTELLUNG

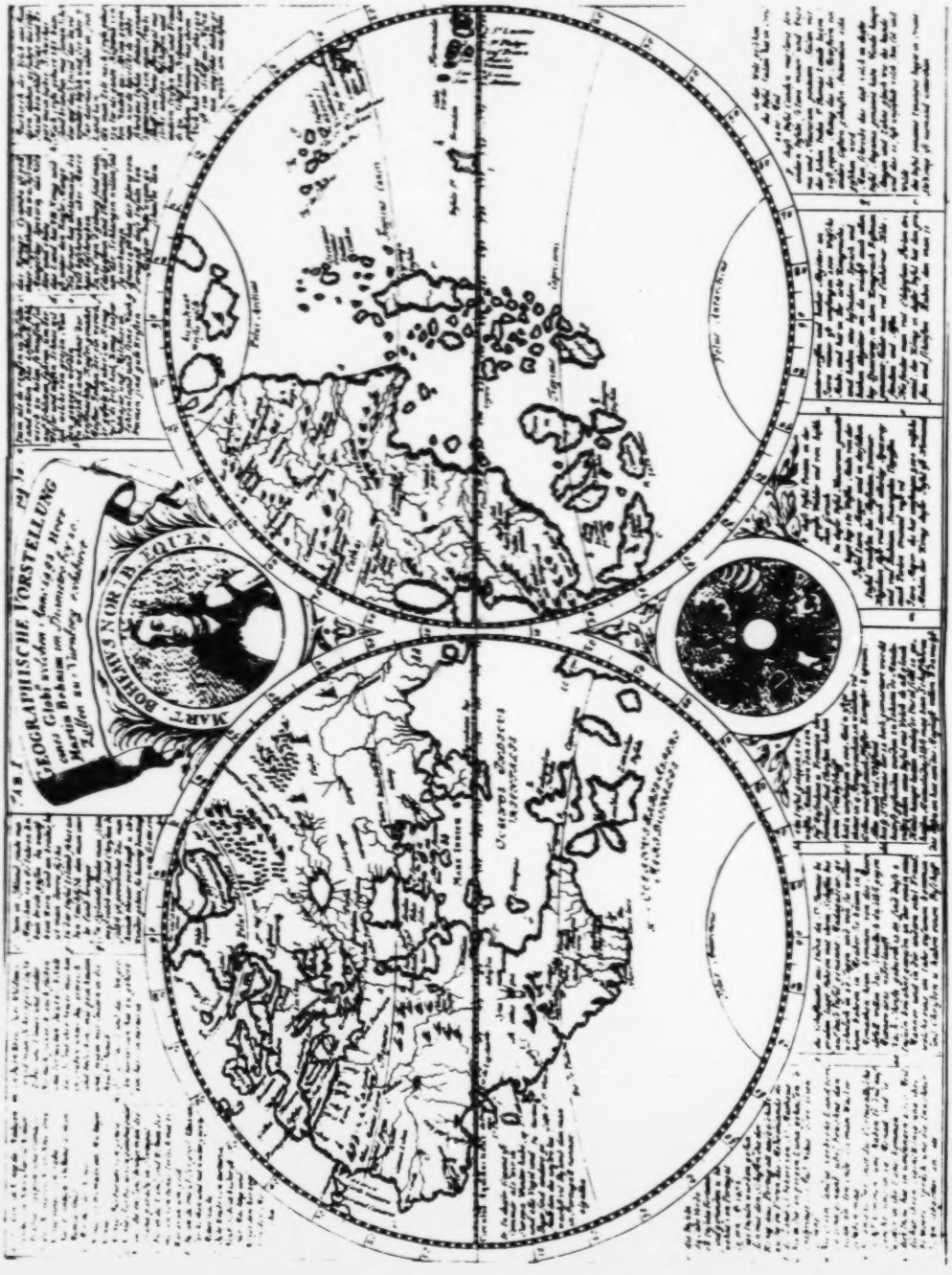

Exhibit 4 *Martin Behaim's World Map*

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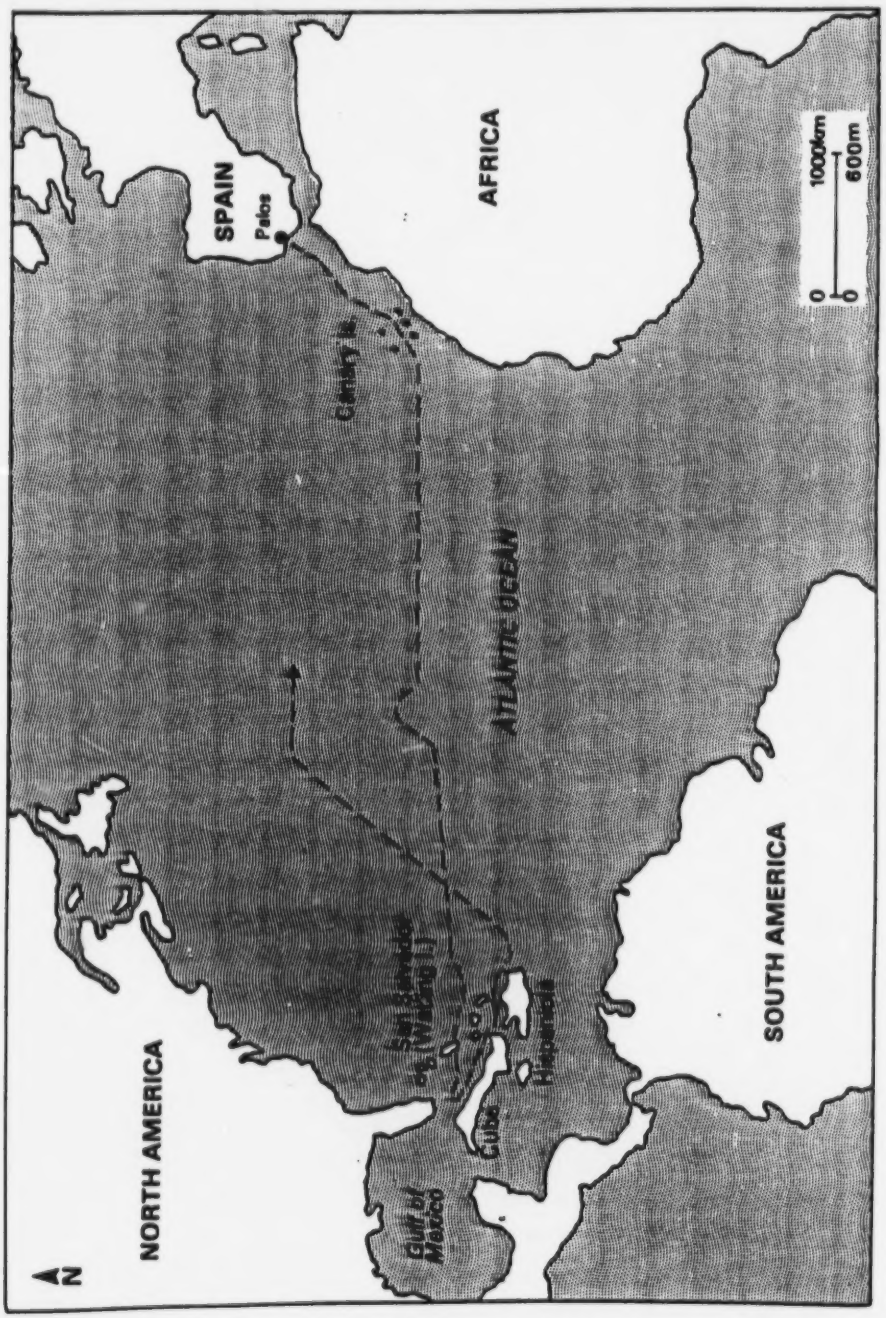
STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT C

FIRST VOYAGE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, 1492



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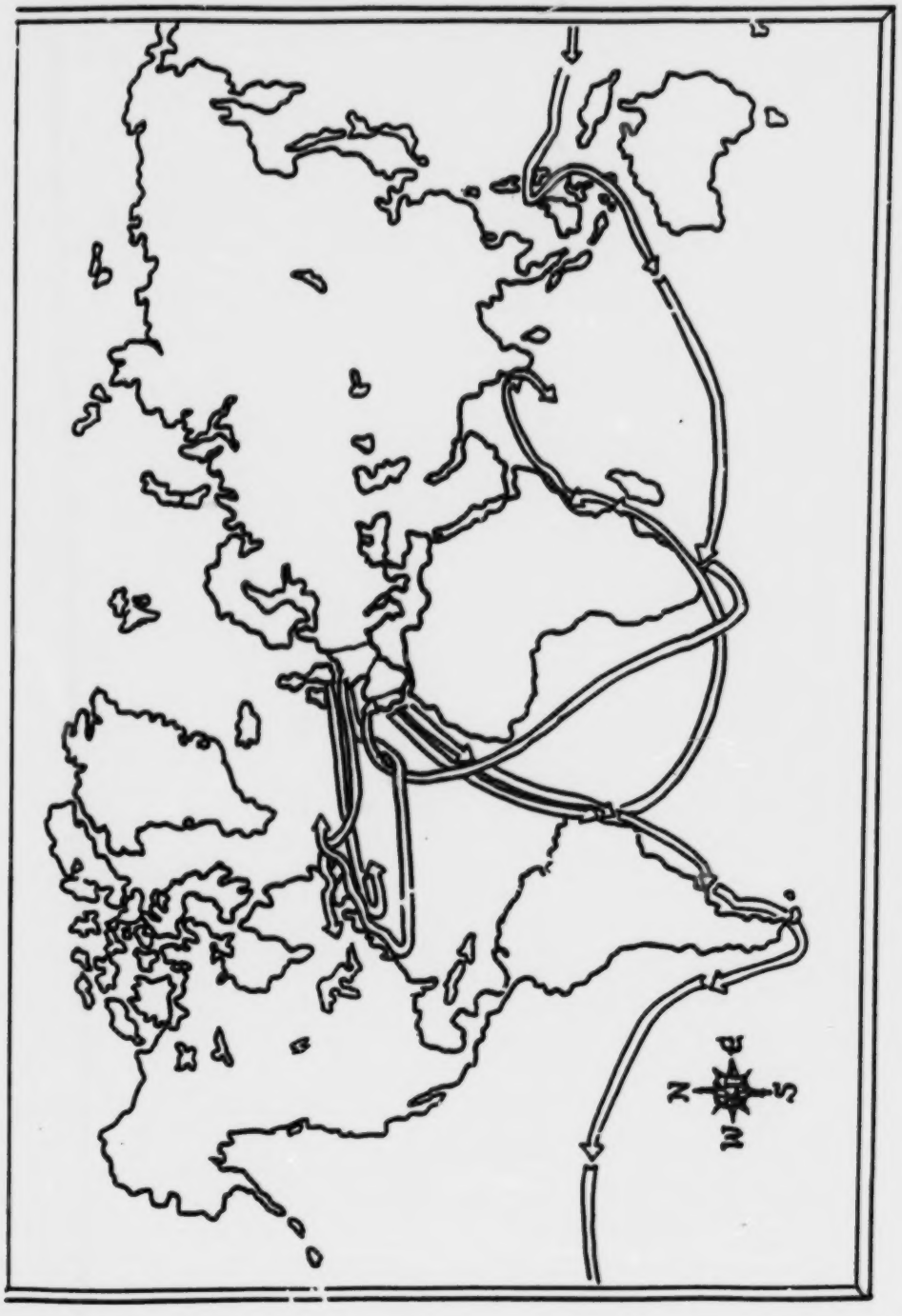
THE AGE OF EXPLORATION

J. Cabot (England) 1497 —·—·—·—·—·—▶
DaGama (Portugal) 1497-1498 - - - - - - - - ▶
Magellan (Spain) 1519-1522 ——————▶
Verrazano (France) 1524 · · · · · · · · · · · · ▶
Cartier (France) 1535 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx ▶

Illustrated by Sharon Rudhal

THE AGE OF EXPLORATION



Illustrated by Sharon Rudhal

LESSON TWO

THE MANY PEOPLES OF THE AMERICAS

A. Objectives

1. Students will understand that due to the paucity of written sources, most of our knowledge about the first Americans is based on archaeological evidence.

2. Students will understand that some American cultures also had ethnocentric world views, by analyzing the Fejérvary Screenfold of the Aztec Empire.

3. Students will understand that the Aztecs were only one example of the various diverse peoples and cultures of the Americas.

4. Students will be able to identify, locate, classify, evaluate and compare various societies in the Americas.

B. Lesson Background

When Columbus sailed to the Americas, he encountered the descendents of the original discoverers of the "New World." A lack of written evidence has made the pre-contact history of these peoples difficult to write. Too often historians have portrayed their history as static, with little change until the arrival of Europeans in 1492. Such portrayals make European conquest and dominance of natives seem inevitable. In these histories static, "primitive" peoples can do little to thwart the progressive march of "advanced" civilizations.

Archaeological evidence, however, has begun to provide a corrective to this bias through two of its findings. First, archaeologists have made historians aware of the tre-

mendous cultural diversity of pre-Columbian Americans. We realize that the stereotypes perpetrated by the first explorers who had only minimal contact with those American civilizations along the coast did not apply to the vast majority of the continent's inhabitants. Instead, the Americas were home to a vast array of culturally and lingustically distinct societies. Some Native Americans lived in huge cities while others led semi-nomadic existences in small groups. Second, archaeologists have helped historians to see the richness of Native American history. Native American societies underwent many changes and transformations before the arrival of Columbus. Some societies had reached artistic and cultural peak while others struggled merely to survive.

The Arawakan speaking Tainos, the first people Columbus "discovered" in the Caribbean, lived in small yet highly stratified villages of usually one hundred or fewer inhabitants (see activities for Caribbean house). Individual settlements lived off of agriculture, fishing, and hunting. These settlements also traded by canoe with others as far away as Central America. Not surprisingly, most Caribbean societies had strong maritime skills and were capable of making long voyages in the open sea with up to thirty people per vessel. The influence of these people's culture remains with us today as several Arawakan words have passed into Spanish and then English. Canoe, tobacco, barbecue, and hammock (derived from the Taino word hamaca meaning bed) are all words that we still use today and that can tell us something about how the Tainos lived in the past.

The greatest wealth of archaeological evidence currently under study has come from the great Native American cities. Built near present day East St. Louis, the city of Cahokia provided a home for perhaps 40,000 people at its

peak several centuries before Columbus arrived in the Caribbean. The city centered around a huge temple made of earth with a base that covered fifteen acres and a height equal to that of a ten-story building. The city also contained more than one hundred smaller mounds that served as burial sites. A system of trails and roads radiated out from the city's center past farms and connected the city with its major trading partners.

At the present site of Mexico City, another Native American city, the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán, thrived until conquered by Spaniards in 1521 (see Lesson Four). The modern rendition of this city, based on archaeological evidence and included in this lesson, shows a city larger than any in Spain at the time. Here an elaborate, hierarchical social structure, with the Aztec ruler Montezuma at the top and slaves at the bottom, shaped daily life.

Cahokia and Tenochtitlán were certainly not typical Native American settlements before the arrival of Columbus. The majority of Native Americans lived in smaller, more egalitarian villages where they subsided on a combination of seasonal hunting and agriculture. Still, these settlements varied tremendously according to their environment. From the inhabitants of present-day Alaska to those encountered by Columbus in the Caribbean, all Native American societies adapted to their local surroundings.

Yet it is important to recognize that these societies did more than adapt; from the construction of huge mounds near the Mississippi to variations of slash and burn agriculture in the Caribbean and present-day northeastern United States, all native societies also changed the environment in which they lived. Only in recent times, due in large part to population pressures, have such

practices been viewed as threatening to humanity. In 1492, when the world's population was much smaller, the earth's environment could recover much more easily from the changes inflicted by humans.

The first primary document in this lesson, the opening page from an Aztec ritual book, provides the opportunity to compare the pre-contact world view of the Aztecs who lived in central Mexico to that of Europeans. Because our knowledge of this book, the Fejérváry Screenfold, is largely speculative, care must be taken when comparing it with the Ebstorf map in the preceding lesson. Nevertheless, similarities and differences can be drawn. Like the Ebstorf map, the Screenfold served a larger purpose than maps of today; the Screenfold must be examined as a religious text as well as a map. At its center, the Fire- or Year-Lord Xiuhtecutli represents the Aztec belief that their society lay at the center of the world. Six other gods surround Xiuhtecutli. The four sections of the screenfold symbolize the points on the compass with east at the top, as well as the four quarters of the 260 day ritual calendar shared by most people in the region. Each cardinal point has its own meaning or character; the four sections have their own deity, tree, animal life, and color. Thus, like the European Ebstorf map, the Fejérváry Screenfold illustrates that the pre-contact Aztecs had a precise, ethnocentric view of their society and its place in relation to the world and the heavens.

Sources: Alvin M. Joseph Jr., ed., *America in 1492: The World of the Indian Peoples Before the Arrival of Columbus* (1992); Manuel Lucena-Salmoral, *America 1492: Portrait of a Continent 500 Years Ago* (1990); and J.B. Harley, *Maps and the Columbian Encounter* (1990).

C. Lesson Activities

1. Explain to students that while the Europeans were busy planning on how to sail west to Asia, millions

of people were living in the Americas in a host of varied cultures and societies. Most of our understanding of these peoples comes from archaeological evidence. Much of this lesson will be based upon such evidence.

2. Ask students to take out the Ebstorf World Map from **LESSON ONE**. On the overhead show them **DOCUMENT E**, the Fejérvary Screenfold. Tell them this is similar to the European World Map. Using the *guiding questions*, discuss and analyze the Screenfold.

3. The Screenfold of the Aztecs is only one example of the various peoples of the Americas. In the next activity, students will learn more about the diversity of American societies.

4. Distribute **DOCUMENTS F, G,** and **H**.

5. Students should cut out the pictures for the nine societies from **DOCUMENT G**.

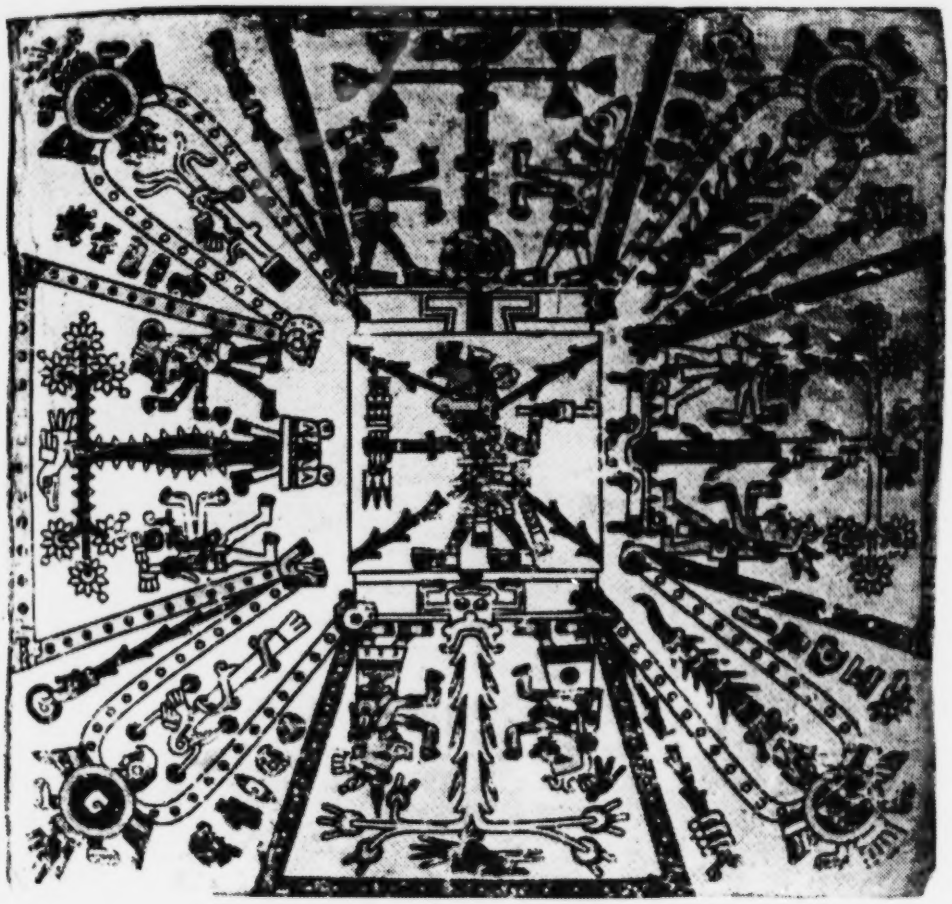
6. Using the clues from the chart (**DOCUMENT H**), students should paste the pictures onto the two maps (**DOCUMENT F**) in the locations they think they come from. (See the completed teachers key for an example.)

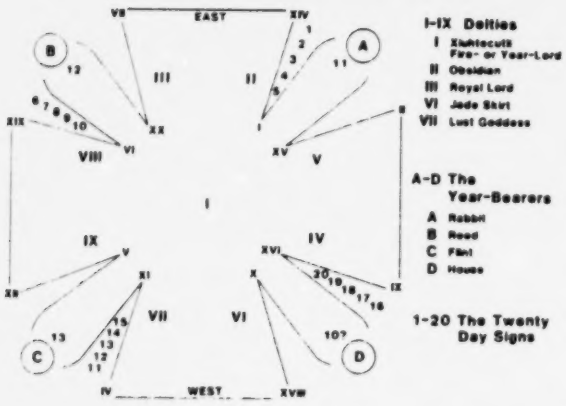
7. Students should turn to **DOCUMENT H** to help them infer, evaluate and compare the various societies. Teachers could use the completed teacher copy of the chart to help guide the student's thinking. Teachers should ask guiding questions to help students make inferences and draw conclusions about the various societies.

8. In conclusion, help students by reviewing their completed chart to see that the Americas, before European contact were lands of varied people and societies.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT E

FERJERVARY SCREENFOLD





Source: National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside; Liverpool, England.

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GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What is in the center?

2. Why do you think the map is divided into four quadrants?

3. How does this compare to the European world view?

4. This map demonstrates the Meso-American belief that they were at the center or "navel" of the world. How is this similar to the European's view?

5. Look back at your Ebstorf map. What is located in the relative position of Christ's "navel"? What can that tell us?

TEACHERS KEY: PEOPLE OF THE AMERICAS CHART

	Name of the People	*Clue*	*What else do you know about these people and what can you guess from the picture?*
1	Haida	Lived closest to modern day Seattle.	Stayed in one place for long periods, good at fishing, had elaborate architecture, and settlements made of wood.
2	Inuit (Eskimo)	Their home could survive only in this climate.	Wore heavy furs, fished, used snowshoes and sleds.
3	Algonquian	Lived on the North American east coast.	Used surrounding forest to make large dwellings, lived on a combination of hunting and agriculture, depending on the season.
4	Carib	Their name is the geographic clue.	Their shelters allowed breezes in and yet were strong enough to withstand occasional hurricanes. They were skilled at sea and had trade contacts with people living in Mexico.
5	Vaupe	Lived near the Amazon River Basin.	Shelters protected them mostly from rain, and housed large numbers of people.
6	Tehuelches	Lived in the South American plains.	Moved around on foot to follow the game they hunted. Used skin to make dwellings.
7	Aztec	Created a city larger than all in Europe at the time.	Had a powerful society with a range of social classes, elaborate rituals, trade networks, and extensive agriculture.
8	Pueblo	Their homes were built to insulate them from desert heat.	Remained in one place for long periods, grew corn and made tortillas, and did some hunting.
9	Omaha	Homes could be easily taken apart to follow their source of food.	Travelled on foot to follow buffalo, used buffalo for food, shelter, tools, etc.

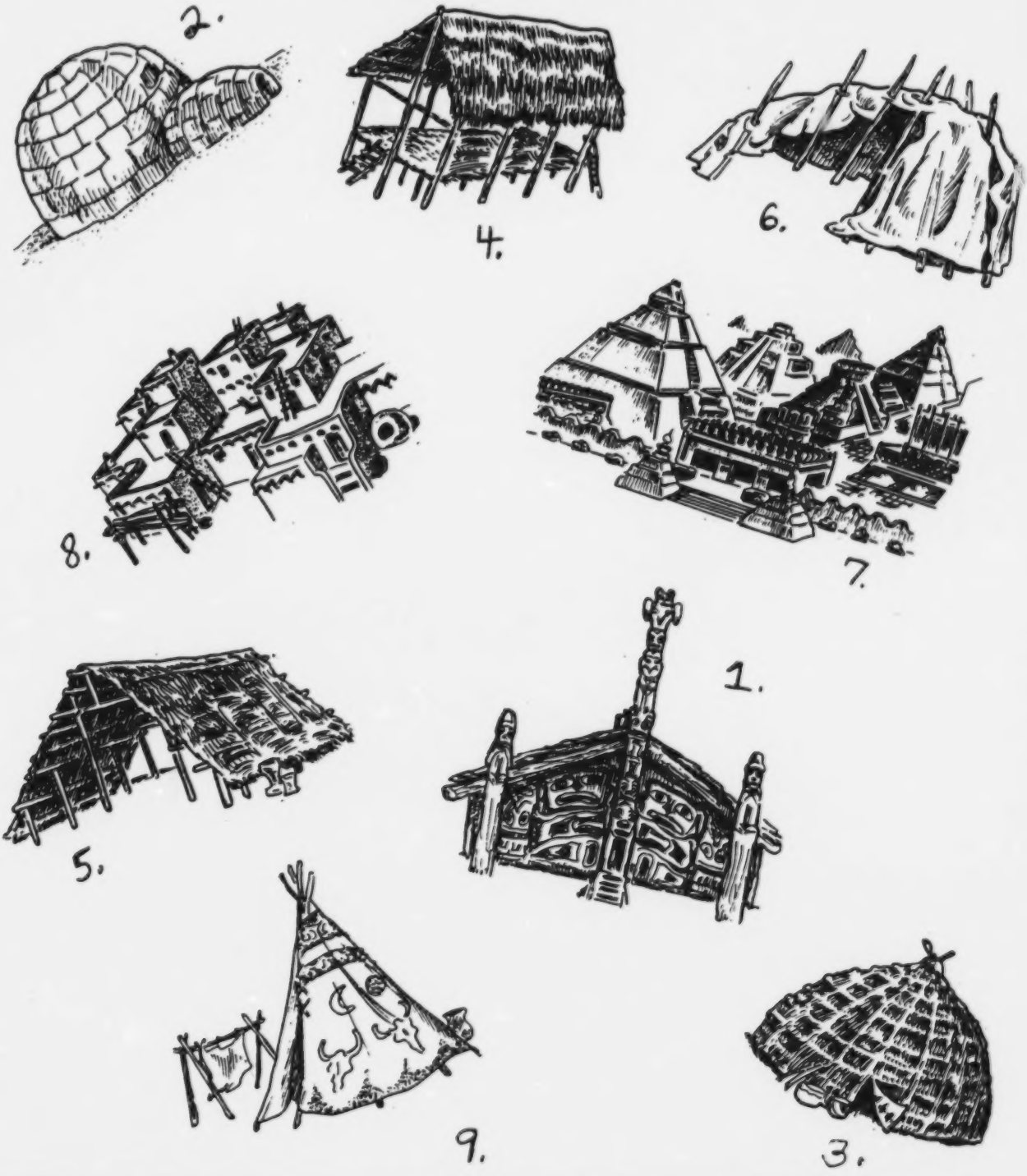
PEOPLES OF AMERICA TEACHERS KEY

PEOPLES OF AMERICA TEACHERS KEY

PEOPLES OF AMERICA ACTIVITY

PEOPLES OF AMERICA ACTIVITY

PEOPLES OF AMERICA ACTIVITY



PEOPLE OF THE AMERICAS ACTIVITY CHART

	Name of the People	*Clue*	*What else do you know about these people and what can you guess from the picture?*
1	Haida	Lived closest to modern day Seattle.	
2	Inuit (Eskimo)	Their home could survive only in this climate.	
3	Algonquian	Lived on the North American east coast.	
4	Carib	Their name is the geographic clue.	
5	Vaupe	Lived near the Amazon River Basin.	
6	Tehuelches	Lived in the South American plains.	
7	Aztec	Created a city larger than most in Europe at the time.	
8	Pueblo	Their homes were built to insulate them from desert heat.	
9	Omaha	Homes could be easily taken apart to follow their source of food.	

LESSON THREE

THE FIRST VOYAGE: MOTIVES AND SHIPBOARD CONDITIONS

A. Objectives

1. Students will understand Columbus's motives for the journey by reading and interpreting the introduction to his journal.

2. Students will understand the conditions of the journey by reading and interpreting an imaginary "Manifest of the Journey" as well as a shipboard illustration showing shipboard conditions.

3. Students will evaluate the potential that shipboard conditions had for inciting mutiny.

4. Students will synthesize this information by creating an imaginary journal by a member of Columbus's crew.

B. Lesson Background

Born in the independent Italian republic of Genoa in 1451, Columbus initially followed his father's career path and learned how to weave wool. In his teens, however, he took up an interest in sailing and managed to work on many short voyages near Genoa. By his mid-20s, Columbus had gathered tremendous experience throughout the Mediterranean and had even ventured into nearby portions of the Atlantic. For reasons unknown to historians, Columbus moved to Portugal in the mid-1470s; perhaps he made this transition to take advantage of Portugal's growing preeminence in exploring the eastern Atlantic along the coast of Africa. Whatever his reasons, the move to Portugal treated him well, for he there met his wife Felipa Moniz. Felipa offered Colum-

bus more than companionship; as the daughter of a prominent Portugese navigator, she gave Columbus her late father's maps and papers, some financial security, and, most importantly, connections with the Portugese royal court. Columbus's marriage gave him the first opportunity to request government support for a trans-Atlantic voyage to Asia.

Portugal's King João II, however, proved less optimistic than Columbus that Asia could be reached by sailing west and declined to back him. Until recently, historians have used João's denial to paint Columbus as a visionary and the Portugese royal court as stubborn and ignorant. Yet João had sound reasons for balking at Columbus's request. Many fifteenth-century cartographers estimated the world to be much larger than did Columbus. Indeed, had Columbus known the true size of the world, he may have been much more reluctant to sail. In addition, only through hindsight do we know the importance of Columbus's trans-Atlantic voyage. No European in the fifteenth century suspected that between Europe and Asia lay two resource-abundant continents with cities larger than any in Europe at the time. Furthermore, many rightfully saw promise in the ongoing Portugese efforts to reach Asia by rounding the tip of Africa. Thus for good reasons the Portugese King viewed a trans-Atlantic voyage as a risky investment.

While Columbus may not have had accurate geographical knowledge on his side, he certainly had plenty of perseverence and presented his case to the Spanish royal government where he found a more receptive audience. Spanish economic and religious considerations probably led to this favorable response. A 1479 treaty with Portugal prohibited Spain from exploring sea routes around the tip of Africa, making the king and queen more open

to alternative methods of expanding their wealth. At the same time, long struggles with Muslims made the monarchy eager to expand its religious influence. As the introduction to Columbus's diary included in this lesson shows (**DOCUMENT I**), Columbus and the Spanish monarchy sought to create an ally out of one of Asia's leaders, the Great Khan, by converting him to Christianity. In addition, Columbus stood to benefit personally through a share of the profits and the right to govern the lands he might conquer. Both the Spanish monarchy and Columbus had much to gain from finding a western route to Asia.

Although he had the backing of the Spanish government, Columbus still had difficulty preparing for the voyage. Royal funds eased the purchasing of three ships and the necessary supplies; recruiting crew members, however, proved more difficult. Although most sailors believed the world to be round, few wanted to risk their lives on a long voyage out of sight of land through unexplored territory. That three of Columbus's ninety crew members came straight from jail shows the difficulty of finding volunteers.

Once the three ships had set sail, the voyage went relatively smoothly. Thirty-three days of good weather and brisk winds for the sails helped the expedition make good time. These same good winds, however, led many crew members to fear that they would not be able to make the return trip. Such fears led to the near mutiny covered in **DOCUMENT M**. These excerpts must be used with extreme care because they come from a trial several years after the voyage, in which the crown disputed the Columbus family's claim to land in the Americas.

Despite the crew's grumblings near the end of this first voyage, shipboard conditions were probably quite typical for a fifteenth-century sea voyage. For a non-sailor, the crowded conditions and poor food would have made life unbearable. Seasoned sailors, however, were accustomed to long periods with nothing to eat or drink except stale water, stale biscuits and pea soup filled with salted meat. But on this voyage, sailing in uncharted waters without seeing land for long periods of time had to make even the experienced sailor nervous, since a ship could only carry a finite amount of food and water. No wonder many wanted to turn back.

Source: William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips, *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (1992).

C. Lesson Activities

1. Remind students of the two worlds they have studied the past several days, Europe and the Americas.

2. Tell students that today they will begin to look more closely at one of the first Europeans to bring the two worlds into contact—Columbus.

3. Ask students to brainstorm possible motives behind Columbus's journey. Explain that you will investigate **DOCUMENT I**: "Introduction to Columbus's Diary" This source should help students arrive at possible motives for the journey.

4. Pass out **DOCUMENT I**. Help students complete the guiding questions within the document. Then have students complete the motivation chart. Review and discuss the conclusions the students drew.

5. Explain to students that once they had left on this journey Columbus and his crew faced the difficult conditons of shipboard life. Distribute to students the Manifest of Voyage and the Ship Illustrations, **DOCUMENTS J, K & L.** Using these as resources students should answer the following questions (oral or written).

   a. What are your first impressions about shipboard life?

   b. Why is the food all described as "dried, hard or salted."

   c. Who is the one bed for?

   c. Is there a purpose for the cats?

   d. After several months on this ship how might people begin to behave and why?

6. Distribute and have students complete the questions on **DOCUMENT M.** Use this document to help students arrive at the conclusion that after over a month without seeing land many sailors were contemplating mutiny.

7. To have students create meaning out of this material, ask them to compose a diary of a crew member with at least three entries.

   a. September 11, 1492 (saw land recently)
   b. October 7, 1492 (enroute)
   c. October 10, 1492 (still no land)

   These diary entries should reflect information and

conclusions drawn from the manifest, the illustrations, and the primary source documents

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT I

INTRODUCTION TO COLUMBUS'S DIARY
(Primary Source Excerpts)

Most Christian and most exalted and most excellent and most powerful Princes, King and Queen of the Spains and of the islands of the sea, Our sovereigns.

1. Who is Columbus writing this letter to?

...Forasmuch as in this present year of 1492, after Your Highnesses had brought to an end the war with the Moors who reigned in Europe and had concluded the war in the great city of Granada where this same year on the second day of January I saw Your Hignesses' royal banners placed by force of arms on the towers of the Alhambra, which is the fortress of the said city, and I saw the Moorish King come out to the city gates and kiss Your Highnesses' royal hands and those of My Lord the Prince.

2. What event in 1492 is Columbus talking about?

3. Who is the Moorish King and why is he kissing the King and Queen's hands.

...and then in the same month from information which I had given Your Highnesses about the lands of India and a prince called the Great Khan, which means in our language King of Kings, and how he and his ancestors had many times sent to Rome for learned men to instruct him in our holy faith, and how the Holy Father had never provided them, and how so many people were being lost, falling into idolatry and embracing doctrines of perdition;

4. He is worried about the people in the lands of India lacking something. What is it?

5. What does it tell you about how he feels about his religion and how it compares to other beliefs.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT I

Your Highnesses, as Catholic Christians and princes devoted to the holy Christian faith and the furtherance of its cause, and enemies of the sect of Mohammed and of all idolatry and heresy, resolved to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the said regions of India to see the said princes and the peoples and lands and determine the nature of them and of all other things, and the measures to be taken to convert them to our holy faith;

6. How does he propose to "help" the said regions of India?

7. Why would he assume that the people of India need or want Christian help?

...and you ordered that I should not go by land to the East, which is the customary route, but by way of the West, a route which to this day we cannot be certain has been taken by anyone else...Your highnesses commanded me to take sufficient ships and sail to said regions of India.

8. Is Columbus's route going to be different than that of everyone else?

And in consideration you granted me great favours and honoured me thenceforth with the title 'Don' and the rank of Admiral of the Ocean Sea and Viceroy and Governor in perpetuity of all the islands and mainland that I should discover and take possession of and which should hereafter be discovered and occupied in the Ocean Sea, and that my eldest son should succeed in turn, and so on from generation to generation for ever.

9. What does Columbus hope to gain personally from this trip?

10. How does this differ from his earlier reasons for the voyage?

MOTIVATION CHART

Based on your reading of the journal introduction and answering the questions, list the motives of Columbus and the Spanish monarchy for undertaking the journey.

MANIFEST OF VOYAGE
(A Partial Listing)

3 sailing vessels and crews
- Santa Maria: 40 men
- Pinta: 26 men
- Nina: 24 men

From whence they came:
- ages: 24-44
- sailors from Spain: 85
- sailors from Italy: 4
- sailors from Portugal: 1
- criminals aboard: 3

Nonsailors aboard:
- royal butler
- royal comptroller
- secretary of the fleet
- interpreters (Latin, Arabic, & Hebrew)

Pay:
- petty officer: $14/month
- able seaman: $7/month
- ship's boy: $4.60/month

Supplies:
- 1 year supply of hard biscuits
- 1 year supply of salted meat
- 1 year supply of dried peas
- 1 year supply of water
- 3 eating bowls
- rope, tools, and navigational equipment
- 25 cats
- 1 bed

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT J

General Notes:

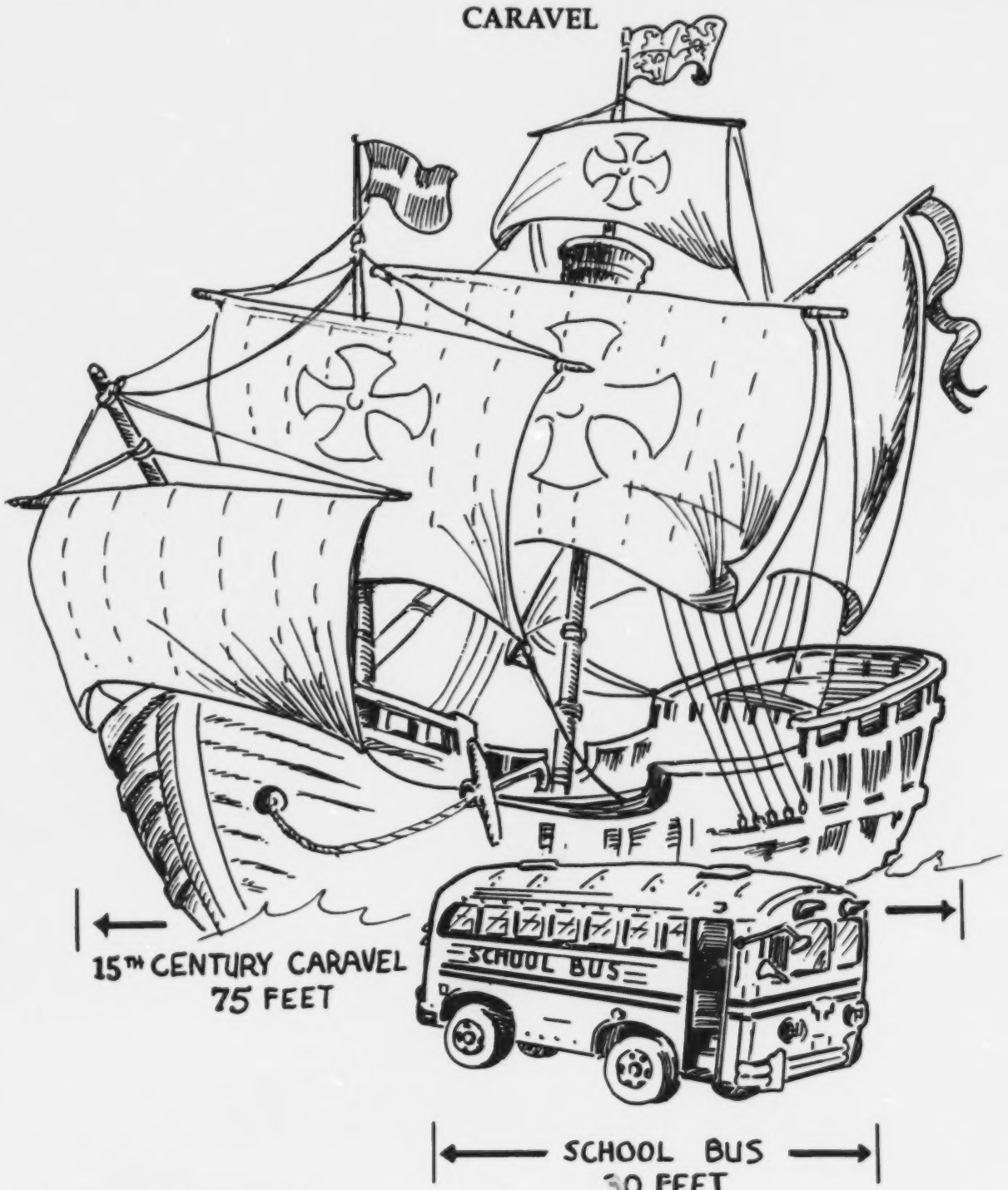
As on all sea voyages, we will save space by leaving behind:
eating utensils
changes of clothing
professional cook
bathing/shaving supplies

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT K

SHIPBOARD LIFE

Illustrated by Sharon Rudahl

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT L



Illustrated by Sharon Rudahl

EXCERPTS FROM A TRIAL AFTER THE VOYAGE

(Primary Source Excerpts)

After nearly thirty days at sea, many in the crew started to complain and wanted to turn back. Columbus asked his officers what he should do. The following excerpts come from a trial several years after the voyage. All of the excerpts are different eye witness accounts of one officers response to Columbus. The discrepancies in these excerpts demonstrate how first hand observations become muddled with time, and that this source must be used with caution. Nevertheless, these quotations provide valuable evidence that the harsh condtions began to take a toll on the crew's morale.

You have been on the ship for over a month. You are well aware of shipboard conditions. One night as you are on watch you hear one of Columbus' officers giving him some advice. This is what you hear:

> ***"Your lordship should hang a dozen of them or throw them in the sea, and if you don't dare to, my brothers and I will come alongside and do it, for an armada that sailed with the mandate of such high princes cannot go back without good news."***

1. What do you think is going on? Who might be threatening and why?

> ***"Onward, onward, for this is an armada and embassy of such high princes as our lords the monarchs of Spain...God will grant us the victory to discover land, for God would never want us to return in such shame."***

2. Why should they continue on this voyage? Who is counting on them?

> ***"Remember, your lordship, that in the house of Pedro Vazquez de la***

Frontera I promised you that neither I nor any of my relatives would return to Palos before we found land, so long as the people were healthy and had provisions; now then, what is lacking? The people are healthy, the ships new, and we have plenty of provisions. Why do we have to go back? Whoever wants to can go back, but I want to go on, for I have to discover land or die in the attempt."

3. How at last does this officer argue that they must continue?

LESSON FOUR

FIRST ENCOUNTERS

A. Objectives

1. Students will learn some of the attitudes and actions of Columbus during his initial encounter with the Native Americans.

2. Students will learn some of the attitudes and actions of the Native Americans during their initial encounter with Columbus.

3. Students will understand the possibilities for bias and distortion in Columbus's journal due to his desire to impress the monarchy and because Las Casas may have made changes in the transcription.

4. Students will understand and compare the first encounter of Columbus and the Native Americans with that of Cortés and the Aztecs through a reading of a translated Aztec source that describes that first encounter.

B. Lesson Background

Columbus's party first landed in the Caribbean on October 12, 1492. The first encounters between Europeans and Native Americans remain shrouded in mystery. The exact location of Columbus's first landing also remains a mystery since no records describing the natives' first impressions have survived and even Columbus's original journal has been lost. The first document in this lesson **DOCUMENT N**, has been taken from a copy of Columbus's journal made approximately twenty years after the original voyage by the historian and Catholic priest Bartolomé de Las Casas. While this document

remains the best available depiction of Columbus's initial impressions of the Americas, it must be read with care for several reasons. First, Columbus recorded the journal to preserve his place in history, and thus may have tried to portray his actions and observations in the most favorable light possible. Second, Columbus did not write his journal in his native language but in Spanish. Writing in his second language, Columbus may have made many errors, and parts of the journal may have been difficult for native Spanish speakers to understand. Further translation into English only multiplies these problems. Finally, Las Casas had become a champion of the Native American cause; in summarizing sections of the journal he may have manipulated or read the text to suit his own purpose. Despite the shortcomings of the journal, however, it provides valuable insights into the first encounters between Europeans and Americans.

In this document Las Casas describes how Columbus's party first set about unfurling banners in tribute to the Spanish King and Queen—Ferdinand and Isabella (spelled with a "Y" at the time)—and had witnesses swear that Columbus had taken possession of the island. Then Las Casas switches to a supposedly direct transcription of Columbus's words. In this section it becomes apparent how strange the native people seem to Columbus, and he evaluates the prospects of their enslavement and conversion to Christianity. Even in the midst of a land and people completely foreign to him, Columbus remains preoccupied with his goals of economic gain—for both himself and Spain—and spreading Christianity throughout Asia. Even after three subsequent voyages and greatly extended contact with Native Americans, Columbus believed until his death in 1506 that he had sailed to Asia and that prosperous trade with Asia's vast empires could be established.

Within less than a generation of Columbus's death, Spaniards had indeed made contact with vast, powerful, and expanding empires. Yet they were not those of Asia's Great Khan, as Columbus had hoped, but those of the Incas and the Aztecs in Central and South America. And bloody conquest, rather than peaceful trade, set the tone for these encounters. The second document in this lesson, **DOCUMENT O**, describes the early meetings between the Aztecs and the Spanish from the Aztec point of view. Like Columbus's journal and all primary source documents, this text must be read with caution. Seven years after the Spanish conquest of Tenochtitlán in 1521, the Spanish missionary Sahagun set out to record and translate the native history of the conquest. The document in this lesson thus presents Aztec impressions through the twin filter of translation and the cultural bias of a Spanish missionary.

Ruled by the tyrannical Montezuma, the expanding Aztec empire had its center at Tenochtitlán, an architecturally magnificent city with a population larger than any in Spain at the time. Over the last century, the Aztecs had proven themselves capable and ruthless warriors. With some 200,000 people in Tenochtitlán and over one million in the empire altogether, it seems unlikely that a small party led by Hernando Cortés could conquer and rule the empire so quickly. The documents in this lesson help to explain this phenomenon, and several parts of it are worth noting. Firearms and horses surely helped the Spanish defeat the Aztecs. Guns and horses not only made the Spanish more efficient than native warriors, but some argue that the appearance of strange looking people with exotic animals and weapons made Montezuma suspect that they were gods. Aztec legend called for the return of the god Quetzalcoatl to return via the sea to rule the Aztecs. This belief undoubtedly would have led to a

confused reaction. Montezuma did not know whether to treat the Spaniard as a returning god or an invading conqueror. To this confusion must be added disease and internal division among the Aztecs. Montezuma's tyrannical rule earned him many enemies. The Aztec social structure had become highly stratified, and the most oppressed classes by no means supported Montezuma. The Aztecs could not mount a unified response to the Spanish threat, and this contest between two brutal, imperialist powers proved no contest for the Aztecs, the largest empire in the Americas, who were ruthlessly decimated by the Spanish.

Sources: B.W. Ife, ed. and trans., *Christopher Columbus: The Journal of the First Voyage* (1990); and Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (1962).

C. Lesson Activities

1. Remind students of the difficulties of the journey for Columbus and his crew. Explain to students that today they will be reading and analyzing Columbus's journal in an attempt to discover what that first encounter was really like.

2. Pass out **DOCUMENT N**, "The Journal." Have students analyze the document by completing the guiding questions. This could be done individually, by the whole class, or in small groups. Be sure to review with the class the responses to these questions.

3. As an extension activity, students should go back to the diary and chose one or two events. The student should then create an illustration of that event, for example, the landing, the sighting of land, or the natives swimming up to the boat.

4. An additional activity might ask students to go back to the diary and choose several events. Remembering that this event was recorded by the Europeans, ask the students to write a diary entry of the same event from the perspective of the Native Americans. How would they have reacted to the first encounter? How would it be the same? How would it be different?

5. Give the students the historical connection to bridge the timespan between Columbus's first encounter with Native Americans and Cortés's first encounter with the Aztecs. This teaching unit provides a document which offers Aztec impressions of the first encounter re-worked into a narrative play (**DOCUMENT O**). You could divide the part of "narrator" among several students. The various members of the class could act out what the narrator is describing. Students should act out through pantomime and by speaking the lines. Students will enjoy the opportunity to act and move around. One note of caution, however; the fifth scene deals with a violent confrontation. Depending on the maturity of your students, you may choose to drop this scene as the first four scenes can stand alone. If you do choose to do this scene, be sure to keep the action stylized as if in a memory or dream sequence. This will help to avoid glorifying the violent actions of the participants.

6. As a culminating activity you may wish to present this play to other classes.

7. Be sure to involve the students in an activity that compares the two first encounter situations studied. Examples include:

a. A chart...what's the same/what's different?

b. A conversation between an Aztec warrior and a Taino.

c. A conversation between Columbus and Cortés.

THE JOURNAL
(Primary Source Excerpts)

Wednesday 10 October

He steered WSW [west by southest]; they made 10 miles an hour and at times 12 and at others 7, and during the day and night 59 leagues; he told the men no more than 44 leagues. Here the men could stand it no longer; they complained of the long journey; but the Admiral encouraged them as best he could, holding out good hope of the rewards they could gain. And he added that there was no point in complaining, because he had set out for the Indies and that he intended to persist until he found them, with the help of Our Lord.

1. How did the crew feel at this stage in the journey?

2. How did Columbus react to the crew?

Thursday 11 October

He sailed WSW. They had a rough sea, rougher than any they had had throughout the voyage. They spotted some petrels [birds] and a green reed near the flagship. The crew of the caravel Pinta spotted a cane and a twig and they fished out another piece of stick, carved with iron by the looks of it, and a piece of cane and other vegetation that grows on land, and a small plank. The crew of the caravel Niña also saw signs of land and a branch covered in barnacles. At these signs they breathed again and all took heart...

3. What things did the crew see?

4. Why does this cause the crew to "breathe a sigh of relief?"

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT N

The first man to see this land was a sailor by the name of Rodrigo de Triana, although the Admiral had seen a light at ten in the evening on the poop deck, but it was so indistinct that he would not swear that it was land. But he called Pero Gutierrez, His Majesty's chamberlain, told him that it seemed to be a light and asked him to look, which he did, and he did see it. He also called Rodrigo Sanchez de Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent as comptroller, and he saw nothing as he was not in a position from which he could see it. After the Admiral had spoken, the light was spotted a couple of times, and it was like a small wax candle being raised and lowered, which struck very few people as being a sign of land, but the Admiral was certain that he was near land.

5. Who first sees land?

6. Who else claims to have seen proof of land?

7. What was that proof?

...So when they had said the Salve, [prayer] which all sailors are accustomed to say or chant in their own way, and they were all gathered together, the Admiral urged them to keep a good lookout from the forecastle and watch for land, saying that he would give the first man to tell him that he could see land a silk doublet, quite apart from the other rewards which the King and Queen had promised, such as the annual payment of ten thousand maravedis to the first man to see land.

8. How does Columbus encourage his men to watch for land?

9. What had the King and Queen done to motivate the men?

Friday 12 October

Two hours after midnight land appeared at a distance of about two leagues. They

shortened all sails, kept the mainsail without the bonnets and lay to, waiting for Friday to dawn, the day on which they finally reached a small island of the Lucayos which was called in the language of the Indians Guanahani.

10. When did they arrive and why did they not go ashore immediately?

Then they saw some naked people and the Admiral went ashore in the armed boat with Martin Alonso Pinzon and Vicente Yañez, his brother, who was the captain of the Niña. The Admiral brought out the royal standard, and the captains unfurled two banners of the green cross, which the Admiral flew as his standard on all the ships, with an F and a Y, and a crown over each letter...

11. What did they bring ashore?

12. Why was it important to Columbus to bring these items?

When they landed they saw trees, very green, many streams and a large variety of fruits. The Admiral called the two captains and the others who landed, and Rodrigo de Escobedo, secretary of the expedition, and Rodrigo Sanchez de Segovia, and made them bear witness and testimony that he, in their presence, took possession, as in fact he did take possession, of the said island in the names of the King and Queen, His Sovereigns, making the requisite declarations, as is more fully recorded in the statutory instruments which were set down in writing. Then, many islanders gathered round.

13. Once he had landed, what was the most important thing for him to do?

14. What does this tell you about his motives?

What follows are the Admiral's own words from the journal of his first voyage and discovery of these Indies. In order to win their good will, he says, because

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT N

I could see that they were a people who could more easily be won over and converted to our holy faith by kindness than by force, I gave some of them red hats and glass beads that they put round their necks, and many other things of little value, with which they were very pleased and became so friendly that it was a wonder to see.

15. From his words and his actions what can you conclude about Columbus's first impressions of the island's inhabitants?

Afterwards they swam out to the ships' boats where we were and brought parrots and balls of cotton thread and spears and many other things, and they bartered with us for other things which we gave them, like glass beads and hawks' belts. In fact they took and gave everything they had with good will, but it seemed to me that they were a people who were very poor in everything.

16. From their actions, what can you conclude about the islanders' first impression of Columbus?

They go as naked as their mothers bore them, even the women, though I only saw one girl, and she was very young. All those I did see were young men, none of them more than thirty years old. They were well built, with handsome bodies and fine features. Their hair is thick, almost like a horse's tail, but short; they wear it down over their eyebrows except for a few strands behind which they wear long and never cut. Some of them paint themselves black, though they are naturally the colour of Canary Islanders, neither black nor white; and some paint themselves white, some red and some whatever colour they can find; some paint their faces, some their whole bodies, some only the eyes and some only the nose.

17. In your own words describe how the Native Americans appear to Columbus?

They do not carry arms and do not know of them because I showed them some swords and they grasped them by the blade and cut themselves out of ignorance.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT N

They have no iron: their spears are just shafts without a metal tip, and some have a fish tooth at the end, and some have other things. They are all fairly tall, good looking and well proportioned. I saw some who had signs of wounds on their bodies and in sign language I asked them what they were, and they indicated that other people came from other islands nearby and tried to capture them, and they defended themselves. I believed then and still believe that they come here from the mainland to take them as slaves.

18. From these observations what can you conclude about the natives' ability to make war and defend themselves?

They ought to make good slaves for they are of quick intelligence since I notice that they are quick to repeat what is said to them, and I believe that they could very easily become Christians, for it seemed to me that they had no religion of their own. God willing, when I come to leave I will bring six of them to Your Highnesses so that they may learn to speak.

19. What future does Columbus see for these native people?

20. Why does he see this future?

READER'S THEATRE
SCENE I

Narrator: The Spaniards arrived in Xoloco, near the entrance to Tenochtitlan. That was the need of the march, for they had reached their goal.

Montezuma now arrayed himself in his finery, preparing to go out to meet them. The other great princes also adorned their persons, as did the nobles and their chieftains and knights. They all went out together to meet the strangers.

He presented many gifts to the Captain and his commanders, those who had come to make war. He showered gifts upon them and hung flowers around their necks; he gave them necklaces of flowers and bands of flowers to adorn their breasts; he set garlands of flowers upon their heads. Then he hung the gold necklaces around their necks and gave them presents of every sort as gifts of welcome. When Montezuma had given necklaces to each one Cortes spoke.

Cortés: "Are you Montezuma? Are you the king? Is it true that you are the king Montezuma?"

Montezuma: "Yes, I am Montezuma."

Narrator: Then he stood up to welcome Cortés: he came forward, bowed his head low and addressed him in these words:

Montezuma: "Our lord, you are weary. The journey has tired you, but now you have arrived on the earth. You have come to your city, Mexico. You have come here to sit on your throne, to sit under its canopy.

"The kings who have gone before, your representatives, guarded it and preserved it for your coming. The kings Itzcoatl, Montezuma the Elder, Axayacatl, Tizoc and Ahuitzol ruled for you in the City of Mexico. The people were protected by their swords and sheltered by their shields.

"Do the kings know the destiny of those they left behind, their posterity? If only they are watching! If only they can see what I see!

"No, it is not a dream. I am not walking in my sleep. I am not seeing you in my dreams...I have seen you at last! I have met you face to face! I was in agony for five days, for ten days, with my eyes fixed on the Region of the Mystery. And now you have come out of the clouds and mists to sit on your throne again.

"This was foretold by the kings who governed your city, and now it has taken place. You have come back to us; you have come down from the sky. Rest now, and take possession of your royal houses. Welcome to your land, my lords!"

Narrator: When Montezuma had finished, La Malinche translated his address into Spanish so that the Captain could understand it. Cortés replied in his strange and savage tongue, speaking first to La Malinche.

Cortés: "Tell Montezuma that we are his friends. There is nothing to fear. We have wanted to see him for a long time, and now we have seen his face and heard his words. Tell him that we love him well and that our hearts are contented."

"We have come to your house in Mexico as friends. There is nothing to fear."

Narrator: La Malinche translated this speech and the Spaniards grasped Montezuma's hands and patted his back to show their affection to him.

SCENE II

Narrator: The Spaniards examined everything they saw. They dismounted from their horses, and mounted them again, and dismounted again, so as not to miss anything of interest.

The chiefs who accompanied Montezuma were: Cacama, king of Tezcoco; Tetlepanquetzaltin, king of Tlacopan; Itzcuauhtzin the Tlacochealcatl, lord of Tlatelolco; and Topantemoc, Montezuma's treasurer in Tlatelolco. These four chiefs were standing in a file.

The other princes were Atlixcatzin [chief who has taken captives]; Tepeoatzin, The Tlacochcalcatl; Quetzalaztatzin, the keeper of the chalk; Totomotzin, Hecateupatiltzin; and Cuappiatzin.

When the Spaniards entered the Royal House, they placed Montezuma under guard and kept him under their vigilance. They also placed a guard over Itzcuauhtzin, but the other lords were permitted to depart.

Then the Spaniards fired one of their cannons, and this caused great confusion in the city. The people scattered in every direction; they fled without rhyme or reason; they ran off as if they were being pursued. It was as if they had eaten the mushrooms that confuse the mind, or had seen some dreadful apparition. They were all overcome by terror, as if their hearts had fainted. And when night fell, the panic spread through the city and their fears would not let them sleep.

In the morning the Spaniards told Montezuma what they needed in the way of supplies: tortillas, fried chickens, hens' eggs, pure water, firewood and charcoal. Also: large, clean cooking pots, water jars, pitchers, dishes and other pottery. Montezuma ordered that it be sent to them. The chiefs who received this order were angry with the king and no longer revered or respected him. But they furnished the Spaniards with all the provisions they needed—food, beverages and water, and fodder for the horses.

SCENE III

Narrator: When the Spaniards were installed in the palace, they asked Montezuma about the city's resources and reserves and about the warriors' ensigns and shields. They questioned him closely and then demanded gold.

Montezuma guided them to it. They surrounded him and crowded close with their weapons. He walked in the center, while they formed a circle around him.

Whey they arrived at the treasure house called Teucalco, the riches of gold and feathers were brought out to them: ornaments made of quetzal feathers, richly worked shields, disks of gold, the necklaces of the idols, goldnose plugs, gold greaves and bracelets and crowns.

The Spaniards immediately stripped the feathers from the gold shields and ensigns. They gathered all the gold into a great mound and set fire to everything else, regardless of its value. Then they melted down the gold into ingots. As for

the precious green stones, they took only the best of them; the rest were snatched up by the Tlaxaltecas. The Spaniards grinned like little beasts and patted each other with delight.

When they entered the hall of treasures, it was as if they had arrived in Paradise. They searched everywhere and coveted everything; they were slaves to their own greed. All of Montezuma's possessions were brought out: fine bracelets, necklaces with large stones, ankle rings with little gold bells, the royal crowns and all the royal finery—everything that belonged to the king and was reserved to him only. They seized these treasures as if they were their own, as if this plunder were merely a stroke of good luck. And when they had taken all the gold, they heaped up everything else in the middle of the patio.

La Malinche: "Mexicanos, come forward! The Spaniards need your help! Bring them food and pure water. They are tired and hungry; they are almost fainting from exhaustion! Why do you not come forward? Are you angry with them?"

Narrator: The natives already had begun to shun their fear of the Spaniards. In the next scene we see that their fears were justified. It takes place in an enclosed patio where the natives are celebrating a fiesta.

The great captains, the bravest warriors, danced at the head of the files to guide the others. The youths followed at a slight distance. Some of the youths wore their hair gathered into large locks, a sign that they had never taken any captives. Others carried their headdress on their shoulders; they had taken captives, but only with help.

Then came the recruits, who were called "the young warriors." They had each captured an enemy or two.

Crowd: "Come, comrades, show us how brave your are! Dance with all your hearts!"

Narrator: At this moment in the fiesta, when the dance was loveliest and when song was linked to song, the Spaniards were seized with an urge to kill the celebrants. They all ran forward, armed as if for battle. They closed the entrances

and passageways, all the gates of the patio: the Eagle Gate in the lesser palace, the Gate of the Canestalk and the Gate of the Serpent of Mirros. They posted guards to that no one could escape, and then rushed into the Sacred Patio to slaughter the celebrants. They came on foot, carrying their swords and their wooden or metal shields.

They ran in among the dancers, forcing their way to the place where the drums were played. They attacked the man who was drumming and cut off his arms. Then they cut off his head, and it rolled across the floor.

They attacked all the celebrants, stabbing them, spearing them, striking them with their swords. They attacked some of them from behind, and these fell instantly to the ground. They struck others in the shoulders, and their arms were torn from their bodies. They wounded some in the thigh and some in the calf.

Some attempted to force their way out, but the Spaniards murdered them at the gates. Others climbed the walls, but they could not save themselves. Those who ran into the communal houses were safe there for a while; so were those who lay down among the victims and pretended to be dead. But if they stood up again, the Spaniards saw them and killed them.

The blood of the warriors flowed like water and gathered into pools. The Spaniards ran into the communal houses to kill those who were hiding. They ran everywhere and searched everywhere; they invaded every room, hunting and killing.

Thus we see that the initial contact between Europeans and natives takes a violent and destructive turn. Such is the sorrow of this first encounter.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT P

THE SPANIARDS ATTACK THE CELEBRANTS
THE AZTEC CODEX

As described in Scene III of the Reader's Theatre. Illustrated by Sharon Rudahl.

RELATIONS AMONG THE RACES

A. Objectives

1. Students will understand that the Spanish failure to find a westward route to Asia led them to seek other ways of making a profit. These included using coerced labor in mines and on sugar plantations throughout Central and South America.

2. By reading **DOCUMENT Q**, Bartolomé de Las Casas, students will understand that atrocities committed in the name of profit by Europeans such as Columbus and Cortes did not go unopposed.

3. Students will understand that although Las Casas criticized Spanish actions in the Americas, he never questioned his ethnocentric assumptions that Native Americans should be converted to Christianity or that Spain had a right to rule over the Americas.

4. Students will understand that because of disease and native resistance, Europeans could not extract the labor they desired from the Americas and thus turned to West Africa to satisfy their wants.

5. Students will understand the dehumanizing brutality of the African slave trade by interpreting excerpts from the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano.

B. Lesson Background

Unable to establish the Asian trade relations for which they originally had hoped, the Spanish turned to mining for silver and gold to make the Americas profitable. Relying on the forced labor of the native population, the

Spanish made the Caribbean a cruel place even by the standards of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Yet Spanish brutality did not go unopposed. The Spanish missionary Bartolomé de Las Casas, the same person who transcribed Columbus's journal, became the foremost Spanish defender of Native American rights. His *Brief Relation of the Destruction of the Indies* (1522), from which excerpts have been taken for this lesson, criticized Spanish treatment of Native Americans and helped to create a "black legend" surrounding Spanish cruelty. Although Las Casas offered an exceptionally critical portrayal of the Spanish, he never questioned the assumptions that Spain had the right to rule in the Americas or that Native Americans should be converted to Christianity. Even in defending native rights he never escaped his own ethnocentric biases.

In the sixteenth century, the Spanish discovered an alternative means of making the Americas profitable. Sugar, at the time a luxury item for Europeans, grew well in the Caribbean climate and offered a handsome profit as Europe quickly developed a sweet tooth. Unfortunately, sugar did not grow by itself, but required continuous hard labor in miserable tropical heat. Decimated by disease and Spanish brutality, the Native American population alone did not meet the labor requirements of a vast sugar plantation economy. To make Caribbean sugar plantations profitable, the Spanish, Portuguese, and eventually the English turned to West Africa. From Africa they forcibly shipped slaves to be sold as property in the Caribbean where most were worked to death. In the end, Europeans brought about than 11 million Africans to the Americas. Miserable conditions for the enslaved peoples crossing the Atlantic meant that many of those captured did not live long enough to see the "New World."

DOCUMENT R provides a first-hand account of the dreaded "middle passage" from Africa to the Americas. In 1756, at the age of eleven, Olaudah Equiano (1745-1797) was abducted from his home in Benin, Africa by slave traders from another tribe. They sold Equiano to English slave traders who took him first to Barbados and eventually to the British colony of Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, Equiano's owner helped to educate him and promised to free him eventually. Equiano, unwilling to leave his fate up to his master's whim, managed to accumulate enough money to purchase his freedom when he was twenty-one. By 1789 he had written the autobiography from which the excerpts in this lesson have been taken.

Sources: Marvin Lunenfeld, *1492: Discovery, Invasion, Encounter* (1991); and Francis D. Adams and Barry Sanders, eds., *Three Black Writers in Eighteenth-Century England* (1971).

C. Lesson Activities

1. Explain to students how Europe's disappointment in not finding a short route to Asia was quickly replaced by a desire to find riches on the newly discovered continents themselves. In their zeal to accomplish this goal of making a profit, great atrocities occurred. Yet not all Europeans supported these activities. The most famous critic of European behavior toward the natives was Bartolomé de Las Casas. Today the class will look at some of his writings.

2. Distribute **DOCUMENT Q**, "Observations of Las Casas." The student assignment is as follows. They are Bartolomé de Las Casas. They have been granted a five minute audience with the Spanish monarch. Using observations and statements made in the read-

ing, along with their own persuasive argument, they should compose a speech. This speech must be given to the monarch in less than five minutes in an attempt to end the brutal treatment. Las Casas is convinced that the natives should be Christianized and Spain should rule the Americas. He simply takes issue with the brutality of the treatment. You may wish to have several or all of your students read their speech before the class. Use **WORKSHEET I**, the "Speech Outline Form" if you think it would help some or all of your students in preparing and or presenting their speech.

3. Due to brutality, disease and native resistance Europeans could not extract as much labor as they desired from the Americas and thus turned to West Africa to satisfy their wants. The next set of excerpts **DOCUMENT R**, have been taken from the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano, a freed slave who in this selection recounts his experience during the "Middle Passage." The excerpts have been broken into scenes (1 thru 12). Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a scene. Ask them to read the scene and then on a large piece of paper create an illustration that represents the scene. Then hang all twelve scenes around the room. Now that the class has a "Story Board" of Equiano's experiences, ask students to walk around and "read" the visual story. Students should then be able to report not only what happened but how he felt and what he learned.

OBSERVATIONS OF LAS CASAS

What the Native Americans Were Like:

God has created all these numberless people to be quite the simplest, without malice or duplicity, most obedient, most faithful to their natural Lords, and to the Christians, whom they serve, the most humble, most patient, most peaceful, and calm, without strife nor tumults; not wrangling, nor querulous, [complaining] as free from uproar, hate and desire of revenge, as any in the world.

They are likewise of a clean, unspoiled, and vivacious intellect, very capable, and receptive to every good doctrine; most prompt to accept our Holy Catholic Faith, to be endowed with virtuous customs; and they have as little difficulty with such things as any people created by God in the world.

Among these gentle sheep, gifted by their Maker with the above qualities, the Spaniards entered as soon as they knew them, like wolves, tigers, and lions which had been starving for many days, and since forty years they have done nothing else; nor do they otherwise at the present day, than outrage, slay, afflict, torment, and destroy them with strange and new, and divers kinds of cruelty, never before seen, nor heard of, nor read of, of which some few will be told below...

How the Europeans Treated the Natives:

They generally killed the lords and nobles in the following way. They made wooden gridirons of stakes, bound them upon them, and made a slow fire beneath: thus the victims gave up the spirit by degrees, emitting cries of despair in their torture.

Once I saw that they had four or five of the chief lords stretched on the gridirons to burn them, and I think also there were two or three pairs of gridirons, where they were burning others; and because they cried aloud and annoyed the captain or prevented him sleeping, he commanded that they should strangle them: the officer who was burning them was worse than a hangman and did not wish to suffocate them, but with his own hands he gagged them, so that they should not

make themselves heard, and he stirred up the fire, until they roasted slowly, according to his pleasure. I know his name, and knew also his relations in Seville. I saw all the above things and numberless others.

And because all the people who could flee, hid among the mountains and climbed the crags to escape from men so deprived of humanity, so wicked, such wild beasts, exterminators and capital enemies of all the human race, the Spaniards taught and trained the fiercest boar-hounds to tear an Indian to pieces as soon as they saw him, so that they more willingly attacked and ate one, than if he had been a boar. These hounds made great havoc and slaughter.

They wrapped the bodies of others entirely in dry straw, binding them in it and setting fire to it; and so they burned them. They cut off the hands of all they wished to take alive, made them carry them fastened on to them, and said: "Go and carry letters:" that is; take the news to those who have fled to the mountains.

They made a gallows just high enough for the feet to nearly touch the ground, and by thirteens, in honour and reverence of our Redeemer and the twelve Apostles, they put wood underneath and, with fire, they burned the Indians alive.

The Christians, with their horses and swords and lances began to slaughter and practise [sic] strange cruetly among them. They penetrated into the country and spared neither children nor the aged, nor pregnant women, nor those in child labour [sic], all of whom they ran through the body and lacerated, as though they were assaulting so many lambs herded in their sheepfold.

They made bets as to who would slit a man in two, or cut off his head at one blow: or they opened up his bowels. They tore the babes from their mother's breast by the feet, and dashed their heads against the rocks. Others they seized by the shoulders and threw into the rivers, laughing and joking, and when they fell into the water they exclaimed: "boil body of so and so!" They spitted the bodies of other babes, together with the mothers and all who were before them, on their swords.

SPEECH OUTLINE FORM
(Optional)

Oh most Christian Monarch of Europe, I Bartolomé de Las Casas eager servant of our lord begs for your audience. Please listen to the plight of the natives in the Americas. First I will describe the native people

Use this space for evidence.

But hear my Monarch how the Native Americans have been treated

Use this space for evidence.

In conclusion

Students should mention Las Casa's beliefs on Spain's role in the Americas

EXCERPTS FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF OLAUDAH EQUIANO

SCENE I

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled and tossed up to see if I were sound by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions too differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spoke, (which was very different from any I had ever heard) united to confirm me in this belief.

SCENE II

I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste anything. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before; and although, not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it, yet nevertheless, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side, but I could not; and, besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we shoud leap into the water: and I have seen some of these poor African prisoners most severely cut for attempting to do so, and hourly whipped for not eating. I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner; for I had never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty.

SCENE III

I could not help expressing my fears and apprehensions to some of my country-

men: I asked them if these people had no country, but lived in this hollow place [the ship]: they told me they did not, but came from a distant one. "Then," said I, "how comes it in all our country we never head of them?" They told me because they lived so very far off. I then asked where were their women? had they any like themselves? I was told they had: "and why," said I, "do we not see them?" they answered, because they were left behind. I asked how the vessel could go? they told me they could not tell; but that there were cloths put upon the masts by the help of the ropes I saw, and then the vessel went on; and the white men had some spell or magic they put in the water when they liked in order to stop the vessel. I was exceedingly amazed at this account, and really thought they were spirits.

SCENE IV

While we stayed on the coast I was mostly on deck; and one day, to my great astonishment, I saw one of these vessels coming in with the sails up. As soon as the whites saw it, they gave a great shout, at which we were amazed; and the more so as the vessel appeared larger by approaching nearer. At last she came to an anchor in my sight, and when the anchor was let go I and my countrymen who saw it were lost in astonishment to observe the vessel stop; and were now convinced it was done by magic. Soon after this the other ship got her boats out, and they came on board of us, and the people of both ships seemed very glad to see each other. Several of the strangers also shook hands with us black people, and made motions with their hands, signifying I suppose we were to go to their country; but we did not understand them.

SCENE V

At last, when the ship we were in had got in all her cargo, they made ready with many fearful noises, and we were all put under deck, so that we could not see how they managed the vessel. But this disappointment was the least of my sorrow. The stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us.

SCENE VI

This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable; and the fifth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable.

SCENE VII

One day they had taken a number of fishes; and when they had killed and satisfied themselves with as many as they thought fit, to our astonishment who were on the deck, rather than give any of them to us to eat as we expected, they tossed the remaining fish into the sea again, although we begged and prayed for some as well as we could, but in vain; and some of my countrymen, being pressed by hunger, took an opportunity, when they thought no one saw them, of trying to get a little privately; but they were discovered, and the attempt procured them some very severe floggings.

SCENE VIII

One day, when we had a smooth sea and moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings and jumped into the sea: immediately another quite dejected fellow, who, on account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons, also followed their example; and I believe many more would very soon have done the same if they had not been prevented by the ship's crew, who were instantly alarmed. Those of us that were the most active were in a moment put down under the deck.

SCENE IX

I also now first saw the use of the quadrant; I had often with astonishment seen the mariners make observations with it, and I could not think what it meant. They at last took notice of my surprise; and one of them, willing to increase it, as well as to gratify my curiousity, made me one day look through it. The clouds appeared to me to be land, which disappeared as they passed along. This

heightened my wonder; and I was now more persuaded than ever that I was in another world, and that everything about me was magic.

SCENE X

At last we came in sight of the island of Barbadoes, at which the whites on board gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this; but as the vessel drew nearer we plainly saw the harbour [sic], and other ships of different kinds and sizes; and we soon anchored amongst them off Bridge Town. Many merchants and planters now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in separate parcels, and examined us attentively. They also made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were to go there. We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men.

SCENE XI

They told us we were not to be eaten, but to work, and were soon to go on land, where we should see many of our country people. This report eased us much; and sure enough, soon after we were landed, there came to us Africans of all languages. We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. As every object was new to me every thing I saw filled me with surprise. What struck me first was that the houses were built with stories, and in every other respect different from those in Africa; but I was still more astonished on seeing people on horseback. I did not know what this could mean; and indeed I thought these people were full of nothing but magical arts.

SCENE XII

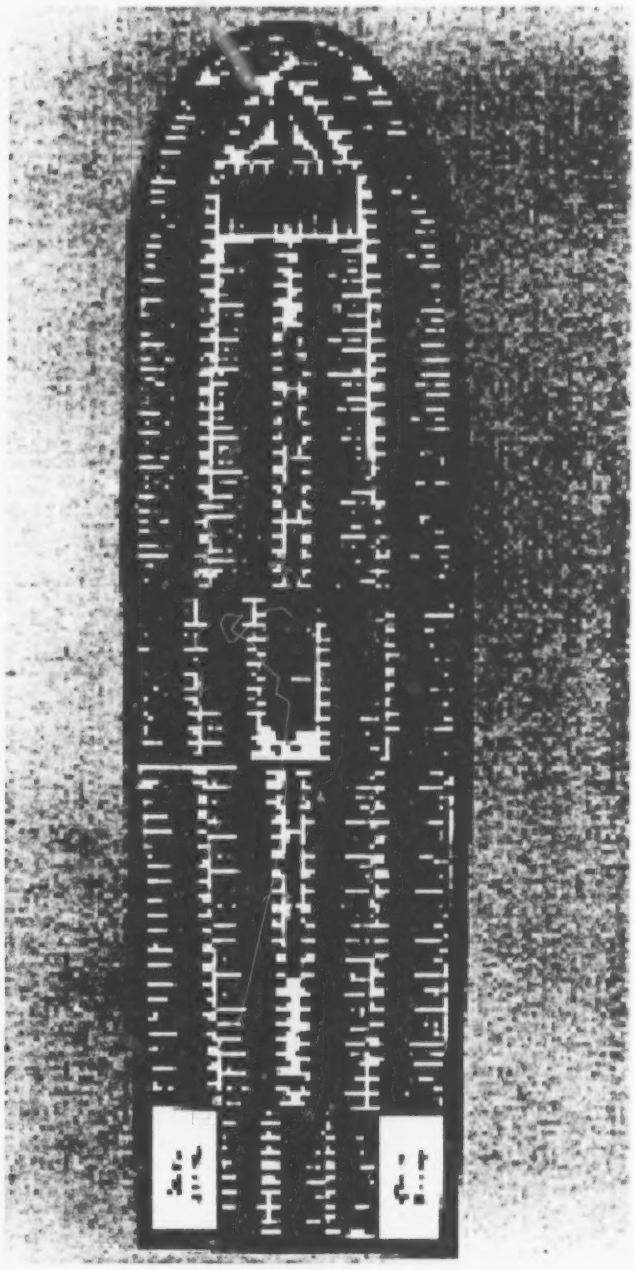
We were not many days in the merchant's custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this:—On a signal given (as the beat of a drum), the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best.

In this manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again. I remember in the vessel in which I was brought

over, in the men's apartment, there were several brothers, who, in the sale, were sold in different lots; and it was very moving on this occasion to see and hear their cries at parting. O, ye nominal Christians! might not an African ask you, learned you this from your God, who says unto you, Do unto all men as you would men should do unto you? Is it not enough that we are torn from our country and friends to toil for your luxury and lust of gain? Must every tender feeling be likewise sacrificed to your avarice?

STUDENT RESOURCE: ILLUSTRATION I

THE INSIDE OF A SLAVE SHIP



Widely distributed in the late 18th century by antislavery reformers who wanted to raise moral indignation about the slave trade. This schematic shows how tightly Africans were crammed into slave ships in order to make the middle passage as profitable as possible.

The lower deck of a slave ship plying between Africa and America during the 18th-century slave trade. Courtesy Bettmann Archives.

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LESSON SIX

SEEDS OF CHANGE AND THE COLUMBIAN LEGACY

A. Objectives

1. Students will understand that the Columbian encounter had its most profound impact upon the inhabitants of the Americas. Most importantly, European disease killed up to 90 percent of the people in some Native American societies.

2. Students will learn that in addition to disease, Native Americans acquired a host of animals, plants and manufactured items that changed their way of life. These included horses, livestock, guns, and metal objects.

3. Students will understand that the Columbian encounter also profoundly affected European society. The effects in Europe were more positive than those in the Americas. The introduction of new food items such as the potato and corn spurned the rapid population growth preceding the industrial revolution.

4. Students will understand that today we are still struggling to come to terms with the global interdependence ushered in by the Columbian encounter. Many of the environmental problems and racial and cultural conflicts that plague us today had their origins in 1492.

B. Lesson Background

When Columbus explored the Caribbean, he found to his astonishment a wide and plentiful variety of plant and animal life with which he was previously unfamiliar.

This abundance provided a strong incentive for further European exploration and eventually colonization. However, following the Columbian encounter, the two distinct regions of the globe began to integrate not only their people, but their flora, fauna and lethal infections. This integration had profound effects for the entire world and has helped shape the world we live in today.

The introduction of European disease to the Americas devastated huge segments of the Native American population. No diseases such as small pox, influenza, and perhaps even the common cold accompanied the early foot travelers from Siberia to Alaska twelve thousand years earlier. Long isolated from the rest of the world, Native Americans did not, nor did they need to, build up antibodies to these diseases. Exposure to these diseases after 1492 thus took a devastating toll. In some cases Native American societies lost 90 percent of their population to European disease within a few generations. Many victims of disease never even saw a single European as coastal societies who had made contact with Europeans passed diseases to inland tribes through routine trade contacts.

Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century science, both European and American, offered little explanation for the epidemics that plagued American societies. To be sure, the large number of fatalities altered traditional social structures; the devastation undermined the religious and political leaders fortunate enough to escape death as they could not explain the epidemics that plagued their people. As for the European newcomers, many saw the sudden decrease in the native population as evidence of divine sanction for conquest and colonization. Without disease, events subsequent to the Columbian encounter would not have taken the shape they did. The natives would

have been able to mount a stronger resistance, and the Europeans would have been much less confident.

Disease, however, constituted just part of the ecological exchange that unfolded after 1492. Before Columbus, no one in the Americas had ever seen horses, cows, bananas, wheat, or oranges. After 1492, Europeans confronted tomatoes, potatoes, corn, tobacco, and turkeys for the first time. With time, many of these items became mainstays in the European diet, and their integration into daily life did more than change the taste of food in Europe. Potatoes and corn supplied the hardy staples that helped to spur the population boom that led to the industrial revolution in Europe. In the Americas, the introduction of "Old World" flora and fauna had an equally profound impact. Livestock such as cows ate the grass which had traditionally supported those animals that natives had hunted for food. This alteration in the food chain set off a series of changes in the American ecology. Native Americans, in turn, had to adapt their lifestyle to their new environment.

Perhaps the most profound legacy of the Columbian encounter—one that challenges us to this day—is that it has raised the issue of how to live in an age of global interdependence. For Native Americans, as well as Europeans, Asians and Africans, the discovery of distinct continents across the oceans with large, culturally different populations challenged traditional world views. Today we still struggle to live harmoniously in a world where we realize that environmental changes in one corner of the globe have repercussions throughout the world. And we still struggle to live peacefully with people that are racially and culturally different from ourselves. By studying the Columbian encounter we can hope to understand the origins of the world we live in

today and thereby work for a better tomorrow.

Source: Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (1972).

C. Lesson Activities

1. Distribute **DOCUMENT S**. This handout contains an image from the Aztec codex depicting the horrors of smallpox as well as a description of the disease's effects written by Cortés's chronicler, Bernal Diaz.

2. Explain to students that in 1521 the Spanish were on the verge of military defeat by the Aztecs only to find that smallpox had defeated the enemy where armies had failed. Hold a discussion about disease exchange, including the following points:

   a. Discuss immunity and lack of immunity (refer to students' own experiences with chicken pox). Explain that the more isolated a community (e.g. Native Americans before the Columbian encounter) the more susceptible people are to decimation by new diseases. Also explain to students that chicken pox is in fact the benign form of small pox which has been handed down genetically by the survivors of the more lethal form of the disease.

   b. Discuss the overall effects on a society when a large percentage of its population dies within a few decades.

   c. Speculate on how people would interpret such a pandemic in the absence of knowledge about germs. (They might look for supernatural or religious explanations, e.g. the Spanish gods are

superior to the Aztec gods.)

3. Distribute **DOCUMENT T.** This includes excerpts from Columbus's log describing the flora and fauna of the Caribbean, which he had never seen before. Ask students to create an advertisement to entice Europeans to the the New World, including images of the paradise which Columbus describes. Since students are illustrating this activity from verbal evidence, this activity can be imaginary.

4. Show students **DOCUMENT U,** a seventeenth-century European woodcut depicting the West Indies. The images are based on descriptions written by explorers such as Columbus. In fact, the artist engaged in pretty much the same task that the students just attempted. Discuss with students how, even after 150 years, Europeans may have still had exaggerated visions of what the Americas looked like.

5. Hand out **WORKSHEET V** excerpts from an Aztec messenger's account of the Spaniards. Have students answer the guiding questions. Students can also illustrate the "strange" Spanish objects in the Spaniards' possession as described by the Aztec messenger.

6. Distribute **DOCUMENT W,** the chart listing the Origins of Typical Plants and Animals in the "Old" and "New Worlds." Have students create a mural depicting plants and animals which migrated from Americas as well as to the Americans.

"New World" ⟶ "Old World"

"Old World" ⟶ "New World"

7. Discuss with students the profound impact of this food and animal exchange. For example, the population of Ireland tripled between 1754 and 1846 as a result of the introduction of the potato. Many more people can be fed out of a field of potatoes than a field of grain. Another important example is the impact of the horse on the economy and way of life of the Indian tribes which lived on the Great Plains. Buffalo hunting, formerly conducted on foot, became infinitely more efficient on horseback. With the more abundant food supply that came from more efficient hunting, the tribes expanded demographically and had more time in which to develop their traditional crafts and culture.

8. Students can look up recipes from their favorite meals and identify the origins of the various ingredients. Could these meals have been prepared before 1492? Even ethnic food is international in its origins.

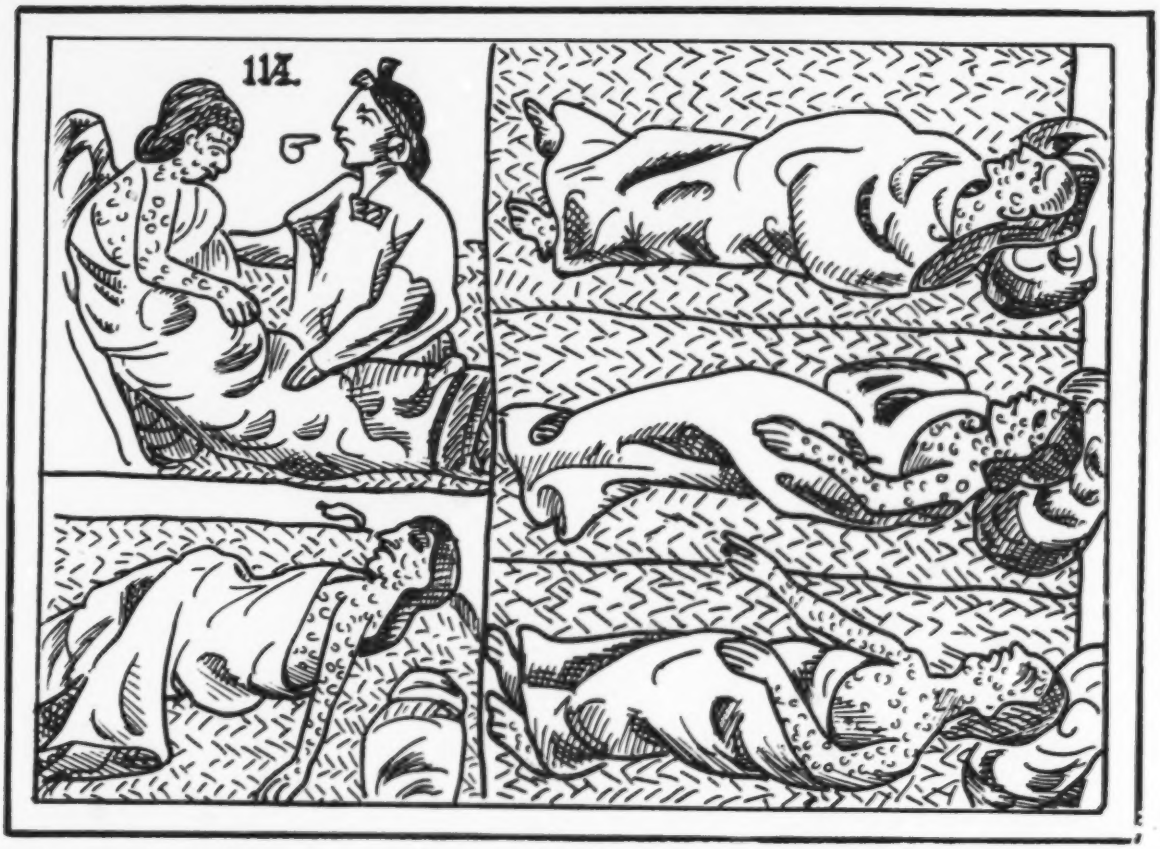
9. Discuss with students the global interdependence created by the Columbian exchange since 1492. The futures of two mutually isolated regions of the globe would be forever intertwined. Brainstorm with students modern examples of this global interdependency such as acid rain, the ozone layer, AIDS, the international economy, the Olympics, etc.

D. Optional Culminating Activity

As a culminating activity, students can create a science fiction fantasy depicting a 1990's equivalent of the 1492 encounter and its consequences. Students can relate their story from the point of view of the native population or the explorers. Students can follow the course of this unit and include the following ingredients in their stories:

- Ethnocentric maps
- Descriptions of the native populations whom they will encounter or explorers they will meet
- Motives for the voyage and descriptions of "ship-board" conditions
- First encounters between the native populations and the explorers
- Relations between explorers and native populations
- Descriptions of the landscape, including flora and fauna
- Lasting exchanges and influences between the two cultures

DISEASE: THE INVISIBLE EUROPEAN ALLY



Only weeks before the great conquistador Hernan Cortés seized control of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) in 1521, his forces were on the verge of defeat. ...[But] the beleaguered Spaniards got an unlikely chance to regroup. On August 21 they stormed the city, only to find that some greater force had already pillaged it. ***"I solemnly swear that all the houses and stockades in the lake were full of heads and corpses,"*** Cortés's chronicler Bernal Diaz wrote of the scene. ***"It was the same in the streets and courts...We could not walk without treading on the bodies and heads of dead Indians. I have read about the destruction of Jerusalem, but I do not think the mortality was greater there than here in Mexico...Indeed, the stench was so bad that no one could endure it...and even Cortés was ill from the odors which assailed his nostrils"***

Text: Reproduced as published in "The Great Disease Migration," by Geoffrey Cowley. Newsweek, Issue #54, Fall/Winter: 1991. Illustration: By Sharon Rudahl.

EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF COLUMBUS
(Primary Source)

And I saw many trees of a very different kind from ours, many of which had several different kinds of branches on one trunk; one branch is of one kind and one of another and they are so unlike each other that it is the greatest wonder of the world, so great is the difference. For example, one branch had leaves like a cane, one like a mastic tree, and so on, so that there were five or six kinds, all very diverse from each other.

I wandered among those trees which were more beautiful to look at than anything else that has ever been seen; I saw as much greenery as in May in Andalusia, and the trees are as different from ours as the day from the night, and the fruits too and the grass and the stones and everything else. It is true that some of the trees were like some found in Castille, yet they were still very different and there were so many other types of trees that they could not be said to be comparable with those in Castille.

Here there are fish of such different kinds from ours that it is a marvel. There are some crested like dories, of the finest colours [sic] in the world, blue, yellow, red and all colours, and others of a thousand different hues. And the colours are so subtle that there is no man who would not marvel at them and delight in seeing them. There are also whales. I have seen no land animals of any kind except parrots and lizards. A boy told me that he saw a large snake. I have seen no sheep or goats or any other beast, although as it is midday I have not been here long, but if there were any, I could not fail to see them.

And the singing of the birds is such that it would seem that a man would never wish to leave here. And the flocks of parrots that darken the sun, and birds of so many kinds so different from our own that it is a marvel! And then there are trees of a thousand kinds all producing their own kind of fruit, and all wonderfully aromatic; I am the saddest man in the world at not recognising [sic] them, because I am certain that they are all of value, and I am bringing samples of them, and of the herbs.

PARADISE IN THE AMERICAS

The European imagination transformed America into the promised land. The multicolored, fantastic plants that appear in these two prints from the Galerie Agreable du Monde (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional) represent, according to the 17th-century mentality, a sum of all the possible kinds of hunting offered by the New World

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EXCERPTS FROM AN AZTEC MESSENGER'S ACCOUNT OF THE SPANIARDS
(Primary Source)

If the cannon is aimed against a mountain, the mountain splits and cracks open. If it is aimed against a tree, it shatters the tree into splinters. This is a most unnatural sight, as if the tree had exploded from within.

1. What is this Aztec describing?

2. How can you tell that this person has never seen a gun before and does not know how it works?

Their deer carry them on their backs wherever they wish to go. These deer, our lord, are as tall as the roof of a house.

3. What kind of animals are these "deer"?

4. Why do you think this Aztec describes horses as deer?

As for their food, it is like human food. It is large and white, and not heavy. It is something like straw, but with the taste of a cornstalk, of the pith of a cornstalk. It is alittle sweet, as if it were flavored with honey; it tastes of honey, it is sweet-tasting food.

5. What kind of food do the Spanish have?

6. How does bread made of wheat differ from the traditional American tortilla?

THE POST-COLUMBIAN WORLD

Origins of typical plants and animals

"OLD WORLD"

Cultivated Plants		*Domesticated Animals*
wheat	radish	horses
rye	onion	cattle
oats	olive	pigs
rice	European melons	sheep
soybeans	citrus and other fruits	goats
chickpeas	banana	asses
peas	wine grapes of various kinds	camels
other legumes	almonds and other nuts	chickens
cabbage	coffee	dogs
salad greens	sugarcane	cats

"NEW WORLD"

Cultivated Plants		*Domesticated Animals*
potato	pumpkins	llama
sweet potato	pineapple	alpaca
maize	guava	guinea pig
beans of various kinds	papaya	turkey
Chili peppers of various kinds	avocado	Muscovy duck
tomato	peanut	chicken (perhaps)
manioc (cassava)	tobacco	dog
squashes	cocoa	

Source: Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. (1972).

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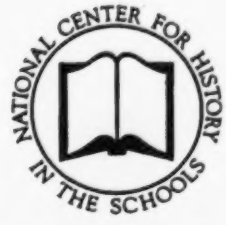

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